Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FOR TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

MAY/JUNE 1992 ISSUE #35
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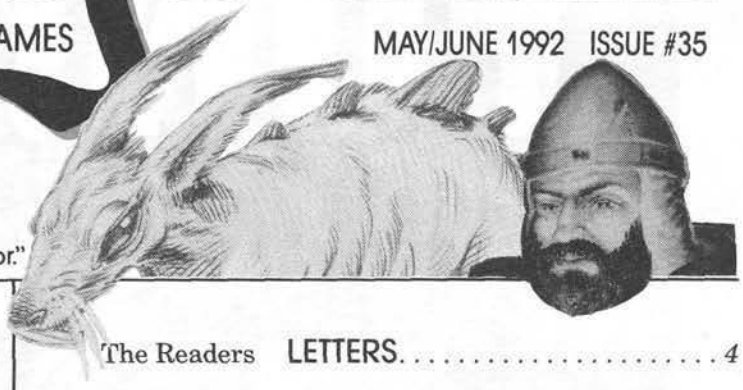
Dungeon®

ADVENTURES FO[illegible]TSR ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

MAY/JUNE 1992 ISSUE #35

COVER: This adventurer is about to have a haunting experience with the girl of his dreams in Scott Burdick's cover painting for "The Ghost of Mistmoor."



One from Column A, Two from Column B

Our readers continue the debate between world-specific and generic modules in this issue's letters column. I don't want this subject to take over the magazine, but I think it's important to get everyone's input to shape what we publish.

As I've said before, we have no plans to overload this magazine with world-specific modules. One per issue is about right. Currently, we'd like to run one each of SPELLJAMMER™, DARK SUN™ (see page 26 of this issue!), RAVENLOFT™, and DRAGONLANCE® adventures per year, with space in the remaining issues for an occasional AL-QADIM™ or GREYHAWK® adventure. We are no longer accepting Oriental adventures set in Kara-Tur, due to a thundering lack of interest. I consider adventures for the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting to be generic for most of our readers, excluding certain areas such as the Hordelands and Maztica (for which we've gotten no adventures anyway). We'll continue to publish D&D® adventures when we receive interesting ones.

Some readers may say that they don't run a Viking campaign and therefore can't use this issue's SideTrek adventure, "The Whale." We see such "specific" adventures as a way to introduce your players to something new, perhaps as a break from your own highly developed campaign world. Our philosophy is "Try it. You may like it." And if you absolutely can't use an adventure with your gaming group, no matter what you do to it, we hope you at least enjoy reading it.

This issue has one world-specific adventure (not counting the Vikings, who could pop up on any coastline). With issue #36, we will return to the SPELLJAMMER universe, last visited eight issues previously. We have several more SPELLJAMMER adventures in inventory, to be spread out over the next dozen issues. We also have one DRAGONLANCE and one RAVENLOFT adventure for future issues. While I consider all of the rest of the modules that we've accepted to be "generic," they certainly represent

Continued on page 38

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The multiverse is finite. Vast as it is, it has limitations. And beyond those limitations exist—other realities, perhaps.
Michael Moorcock, *The Blood Red Game.*

LETTERS

Horrified!

I was horrified to learn from your editorial in issue #32 that DUNGEON® Magazine may be contemplating following the same path that DRAGON® Magazine took. DRAGON Magazine disaffected many of its AD&D® readers by publishing items that were unusable in most of the AD&D gaming systems. DRAGON Magazine's mistake created the need for an AD&D magazine currently filled by DUNGEON Magazine.

Adventures that can be easily modified by any DM for use in his own campaign will satisfy a greater number of readers. Some adventures for specific world settings, like those for the FORGOTTEN REALMS®, GREYHAWK®, and RAVENLOFT™ campaigns, fit into any campaign without major rewriting, thus benefiting a greater number of your readers. However, most adventures for specific world settings, including *Oriental Adventures*, are almost useless to most of your readers. By publishing more generic AD&D adventures, your magazine appeals to a larger segment of the gaming population, insuring your continued success.

Congratulations on having been voted Best Professional Adventure Gaming Magazine. Please continue to produce the outstanding publication that your readers have come to expect.

Randall S. Bisel
Phoenix, Arizona

Don't Change a Thing!

To answer your question as to whether or not to include "world specific" material: PLEASE DON'T! The reasons are as follows:

1. DUNGEON Adventures recently won an award for Best Professional Adventure Gaming Magazine. The format you won it for does not include world- related modules but is more general in nature.

2. The modules and current format allow DMs to easily modify the adventures to suit their imagination/world. If you go the world specific route, this will definitely make things harder on us poor DMs.

3. If these specific world settings are so popular, they should support themselves through sales of the various boxed sets and separate modules. Additionally, they could have their own world specific magazines.

4. RAVENLOFT modules are okay to include in DUNGEON Magazine, as they can be modified fairly easily. SPELLJAMMER™ adventures are definitely a no-no. This setting is too far out. So is the HOLLOW WORLD™ setting.

5. When a subscriber takes out a subscription (and later renews it), he does so based on the current format of the magazine. Readers become familiar with the format and do not like it to change very much (if at all). A reliable format helps readers to efficiently locate things in the magazine, and they know what they are paying for.

Please, for gracious sakes, do not include articles other than on AD&D and D&D® games. You have had fantastic success with your current format; why deviate now? DUNGEON Magazine won its award for general D&D/AD&D modules and not any other RPG or world setting.

Douglas G. Burmeister
El Cajon, California

Actually, it was in 1990 (the year we won the ORIGINS™ award for the second time) that we published our "experimental" TOP SECRET/S.I.™ and MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ adventures. A quick survey of the contents of the 1990 and 1991 issues shows that our mix of generic and specific adventures is pretty much the same for the two years. The only area that saw a considerable increase was in adventures set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS fantasy setting. In each case, these were suggestions only, with options left open for the DM to set adventures in similar settings in his or her own campaign world. We tend to look at FORGOTTEN REALMS adventures as "generic AD&D games," since the Realms encompasses such a large and diverse area.

Decorating With Posters

When we read your request for opinions on the poster, we felt that we should reply. "Ex Libris" (issue #29) was one of the most interesting modules we've played over the last two years. So, when the poster was enclosed in your magazine (issue #33), we matted it and hung it up. We usually have arguments about the decor of our apartment, but both of us really liked the poster. Thank you for including it.

About this generic vs. specific discussion that is going on: We are just glad to have some ideas for our modules, let alone the right setting. Anyone with some imagination can adapt the ideas to fit the environment. It's not *that* much work, for heaven's sake. Thanks for some great adventures.

Jennifer Mullins and M. Scott Kennedy
Berkeley, California

Making Them Fit

This is the first time that I have ever written a letter in response to any publication and helped in sparking such terrible disagreement [see Richard's letter in issue #33]. So I feel it is my duty to respond to some of the new arguments presented.

Let me address those readers who

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claim it is just as easy to convert game-world specific modules as it is to convert modules now to be termed "versatile." It is just not that easy.

The module "Unchained" (issue #22) was very entertaining and fun just to read. However, my guess is that few have actually used it in any world other than Krynn. It was specifically designed for the world and has a great many irreconcilable details in it. There are no gully dwarves, kender, *dragonlances*, draconians, Knights of Solamnia, or tinker gnomes on my world. I *never* intend to add them. If I started doing that, my game world would be mine no longer. My world is a one-of-a-kind place. If I added details from published game worlds, I would eventually end up with a horrible mongrelman of a world belonging to no one.

Both "Jammin'" (issue #21) and "Visitors from Above" (issue #28) cannot be used unless the SPELLJAMMER boxed set is also utilized. "Ex Libris" (issue #29) is a fine module, but Oghma doesn't exist in my game world, so I would have to alter the entire module around a completely different, possibly dissimilar deity. The introduction states that this adventure can be placed in a similar region on another world, but it would still require weeks of alteration to the fiber of my world. Just how much rewriting is the DM expected to do in order to use modules such as these, anyway?

Ultimately, it all boils down to what DUNGEON Magazine's purpose is. Cynics would remind us that its purpose is to make money. I would like to believe that DUNGEON Magazine ultimately provides a service to DMs who need more material than they have time or are able to produce on their own. This magazine is now the only source for modules set on unpublished [noncommercial] game worlds. I think it is very unfair for those who use published game worlds to expect DUNGEON Magazine to publish more than one world-specific module per issue.

P.S. The abishai poster is on my wall, as is the alien hunter from DRAGON Magazine #166. I would like to see other covers from both magazines done as posters. Oh, and Bud: You did a great job. Don't let the lack of recognition get you down. Lastly, for those who didn't get the joke in my last letter, Willie [Walsh] was exploding because he has written a lot of modules. Most of those who wrote to me didn't get it, though someone sent me the probable damage from the explosion: 6d12! Please continue to print my address so readers can yell back at me.

Richard Hunt
6726 Spring Hollow
San Antonio, Texas 78249

I'll let the readers respond to this. For more of my thoughts on the mix of adventures per issue, see page 2.

Map Correction Alert

I received issue #34 and noticed a mapping error in my adventure, "Isle of the Abbey." The Abbey Ruins map on page 31 shows an entrance in the northern wall of area 13 that should definitely *not* be there. The area is a false treasure room and would be completely unconvincing if the PCs could simply waltz into it unhindered. What's the point of having a locked and trapped door in the western wall of a room you can walk into through an entrance in the northern wall?

Randy Maxwell
Odessa, Texas

Watch That Cholesterol!

I have to start this letter off with a congratulation to Peter Clarke. His cover painting for issue #34 is without a doubt the best picture to grace the cover of DUNGEON Magazine to date. If I am not mistaken, this is the first time I have seen his work, and I beg you to convince him to contribute again.

In regard to the debate about "generic" vs. "world-specific" adventures, tweaking and changing the adventurers is standard for me. Even world-specific adventures from the SPELLJAMMER and RAVENLOFT settings have proven easy to adapt to my campaign world. I honestly don't care what world the adventures come from, but from the responses of other readers, it looks like a balance of half generic and half world- specific would make the most people happy.

I do not care for posters (no wall space, anyway), but if you are going to include them, please try to keep any promotional information off them. Let's just get the picture and not a label with the magazine's name on it.

On a final note, has the American Heart Association pegged gamers as a big health risk, or do they have these warning ads printed in all sorts of magazines? I, for one, eat healthy although I realize that during gaming, food tends to be of the less-than-healthy variety. Regardless, I applaud your providing the AHA with free space to print their warnings.

P.S. Bud, I loved the "Holiday Scrapbook" photos (issue #33). It's nice to get a look at what you people look like. I had wondered if Diesel was a real person, a nickname for a group of people, an animal, a machine, or a space alien. Diesel deserves some kind of award for continuing excellence in producing maps for DUNGEON Magazine and TSR over the past many years. Keep up the good work.

Jesse Evans
No address given

Many nonprofit organizations send us camera-ready public service ads which we use as needed, free of charge, when we have small spaces to fill. Our art director, Larry Smith, thinks that the American Heart Association ads are clever and eye catching. We didn't mean to imply that gamers, as a group, have poor dietary habits.

Questions & Comments

I am writing with opinions and with a number of questions:

1. This is in response to the "generic" vs. "specific" campaign question. I would like to point out that most DM's I know (including myself) create their own campaigns. Therefore, the generic type of adventure is much preferable. However, generic doesn't have to be boring!

2. Please publish more D&D game adventures. With the new D&D *Rules Cyclopedia* out, this game has been much improved. It is sometimes possible to convert AD&D adventures to D&D adventures, but often AD&D monsters do not exist in the D&D game. "Of Nests and Nations" (issue #13) is one of the best Known World adventures I have read.

3. The illustrations for "That Island Charm" (issue #33) were excellent. Who is the artist?

4. Is there any way to get back issues of DUNGEON Magazine?

5. I really like the "SideTreks" adventures. Could you print more?

6. How did you get to be editors of DUNGEON Magazine anyway?

Simon Woodside
Hamilton, Ontario

1. I hope nothing *in this magazine is boring!*

2. As I write this in mid March, we have no *D&D game adventures in inventory. As I've repeatedly stated, if you want to read them, you've got to submit them.*

3. If you like an artist's work, check the title page of the adventure for his or her name. The illustrations for "That Island Charm" were drawn by Bob Klasnich.

4. Back issues of DUNGEON Magazine are available from the Mail Order Hobby Shop, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147. You can also call 1-800-DRAGONS to order by credit card.

5. We have several "SideTreks" in inventory and hope to get more. Our plan is to publish one in each issue.

6. Barbara answered an ad in the Chicago Tribune. *Wolf wrote modules for DUNGEON Magazine, then moved to the Midwest to look for a job at the very time we decided to hire an assistant editor. Roger was a prolific writer for DRAGON Magazine before he became its editor. He singlehandedly started DUNGEON Adventures almost six years ago and still gives us a hand. Dale is also associate editor of DRAGON Magazine. He was hired because we liked his socks.*

Maps Overboard!

Congratulations on issue #34. "The Lady Rose" looks marvelous, but I'm afraid that there are a few slight omissions in the map to the *Dama Rosa* that might cause your readers some confusion. The label to area 31 was left off, and an extra staircase put in the chamber that doesn't belong there. Also, area 38 should have hatches drawn on it, which lead to the hold below.

Steve Kurtz
Ithaca, New York

In addition to the mistakes that Steve pointed out on the maps to his adventure, we also managed to switch the labels for the Orlop Deck and the Berth Deck. Sorry, Steve.

Have We Got Vikings!

Thank you for a terrific magazine. I always have something great waiting for me in the mailbox every other month. Now, if only it were available monthly.

I think the idea of a poster insert is great. I'd like a poster of the cover art for "Ancient Blood" (issue #20). I congratulate the authors of some great modules: "Chadranthar's Bane" (Paul Hancock, issue #18), "Beyond the Glittering Veil" (Steve Kurtz, issue #31), "Thiondar's Legacy" (Steve Kurtz again, issue #30), and "Ex Libris" (Randy Maxwell, issue #29). A special thanks to Raphael Fay and Dan DeFazio on their spectacular adventure, "Is There an Elf in the House?" (issue #32). Great job, guys.

My adventuring company, Fire and Ice, is itching for an adventure set in a Viking setting. Do you have any planned for a future issue?

Also, thanks to Bud for the "Holiday Scrapbook" in issue #33.

Justus Hartzok
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

We've got Vikings in this very issue. See "The Whale," on page 36. Look for more Viking adventure in future issues.

"Isle" Praise

I wanted to drop you a line and tell you how much we enjoyed "Isle of the Abbey" from issue #34.

I converted (with ease) the module to fit our campaign's needs, placing the isle in the Moonshae area in the FORGOTTEN REALMS fantasy setting. My wife ran a spunky 6th-level thief through the adventure. I ran two mid-level NPCs as support. The module didn't have to be altered much at all for both of us to enjoy it greatly.

Modules such as this are highly entertaining and very useful. Publishing DUNGEON Adventures was among the best of TSR, Inc.'s decisions.

P.S. Great cover!

Michael Griffith
Wind Gap, Pennsylvania

Short Days, Long Nights

May I mention something I noticed while doing the preliminary work-up for use of David Howery's scenario, "Ghost Dance" (issue #32). The *Wilderness Survival Guide,* referenced for movement through rugged and normal terrain, gives a movement rate of 18 for medium horse, normal load, normal terrain, and a rate of 9 for the same horse, same load, in rugged terrain. The movement rate is considered the number of miles traveled in one-half day, or eight hours (*WSG,* page 31). Thus, the distance traveled (by medium horse) should be 36 miles in 16 hours over normal terrain, or 18 miles in 16 hours through rugged terrain.

However, "Ghost Dance" is a winter scenario. In late November and early December, there are about nine hours of daylight (in temperate-zone latitudes). In practical terms, this reduces the time available for travel each day to less than the number of hours that the *WSG* allows in one half day. This would double the number of days required to travel between areas on the Greyhawk Area Map in the scenario.

I also have a question about Table 4, "Temperature Effects," on page 21 of the *WSG.* In the "Land Move" column, does the fraction represent the amount *by* which the movement rate is reduced, or the amount *to* which it is reduced? The *WSG* says "Land move gives a fraction that represents the amount of reduction a character must take in his normal maximum movement rate . . . ."

E. J. ("Jo") Philagios
Denison, Texas

Thanks for pointing out that travel in the shorter daylight hours of winter means it takes longer to get where you're going (unless you want to ride at full tilt through a dark night). The notes for Table 4, "Temperature Effects," could be clearer. The intent is to reduce the movement rate to the listed fraction. So, if a character's movement is 9 and the "Land Move" column reads 2/3, the movement is reduced to 6.

Show & Tell

A relatively inexpensive "goodie" you could include with a feature adventure would be a pull-out gallery of pictures depicting several of the adventure's most important rooms, items, or what have you (similar to the ones included in the AD&D adventures *The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan* and *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks.* These pictures are a great boon to any DM and serve to enhance the tone and capture the detail of an adventure.

One teensy word of advice: The pictures should be drawn from the PCs' perspective only. Therefore, don't show PCs engaged in battle, as PCs can't very well watch themselves fight. There should be no reverse-angle shots that show the PCs entering a door as well as

the monsters hiding behind it. And please don't waste a picture showing the PCs gaily celebrating after the completion of their grueling mission. Save that sort of art for the cover. These pictures should show only what the PCs can readily see when they arrive on the scene. Coupled with the DM's description, the players will get a full account of everything their PCs need to know at the most critical moments in an adventure. And Jim Ward gets his "goodie."

Carlos Hernandez
No address given

Trading Cards Are Perfect

I really enjoyed the "Holiday Scrapbook" in issue #33. Please tell Bud that he did a great job. I liked seeing the staff of my favorite magazine.

The cards that are included in issue #34 are a very good idea. They can be used in many adventures and in many circumstances. I have been DMing for three years, and the cards are perfect for NPCs. Now I can concentrate more effort on my adventure.

DUNGEON Magazine is the best magazine I have ever read. It has given me many ideas for my adventures and the published modules have provided many hours of entertainment. An outstanding job!

If there is anyone who would like to trade ideas and experiences with me, please write.

John Terenzini
1622 Cherry Hill Rd. N.
State College, Pennsylvania 16803

Why No D&D® Material?

I would like an explanation as to why you refuse to include material for the D&D game in each and every issue. When you do include D&D adventures, you do not print more than one per issue. This does not compare favorably with the amount of AD&D® game material you present.

I am sure you have heard my comments before, but you have done little to demonstrate an ability to satisfy the large number of devoted D&D game enthusiasts.

What I suggest is that you run a reader survey as soon as possible to find out what people want to see in your magazine. Even DRAGON Magazine finally took notice and now runs the D&D feature "Voyage of the *Princess Ark*" in every issue.

If you are having a problem obtaining enough D&D submissions, you must let your readers know this. You may also wish to consider offering increased compensation for D&D adventures or contacting previous authors for commissioned works. If the problem involves submissions which simply do not meet your current standards, then you might consider returning borderline adventures to the authors for reworking. At the very least, you should make known exactly what you desire, possibly in the form of outlines for commissioned works. In any case, please do not abandon this fantastic game, as it has been a terrific source of enjoyment to me for 16 years.

Robert J. Cobb
Anchorville, Michigan

Robert, I can't tell you how many times I've begged in these pages for more D&D adventures. I've done everything you suggested, including having Jim Ward threaten the entire TSR creative staff with dire consequences if they didn't come up with some D&D modules for DUNGEON Adventures. So far I've had very little response.

I have every intention of publishing one D&D adventure per issue, if I can get them. *You're right, however, that we do need to do a reader survey; the last one was done in 1988. We're working on a new survey right now.*

Roger Moore would like me to mention that the only reason there is any D&D game material in DRAGON Magazine is because he found a willing author: Bruce Heard. DRAGON Magazine receives no other D&D game submissions.

Geography Lesson

I am a major fan of the FORGOTTEN REALMS fantasy world and have been running campaigns there for three years. Currently, I am working on a campaign set in the Bloodstone Lands, and I have come across a problem involving the map that is included with FR9 *The Bloodstone Lands* game accessory. According to the map, the only city in Impiltur is Procampur. However, I have learned through this and other sources that Lyrabar, Tsurlagol, Dilpur, and Sarshel (just to name a few) are also cities, yet on the map they are represented as towns. My campaign's PCs are getting ready to travel to Sevone, and before I send them there, I would like to know whether Sevone is a city or a town.

Also, I have noted some discrepancies in the spelling of another city (or town) in Impiltur. On the map in the *Bloodstone Lands* accessory, this settlement is spelled "Alammach." However, on the map that accompanies FR6 *Dreams of the Red Wizards*, it is spelled "Hlammath," and in the text of *Bloodstone Lands* it is spelled "Hlammach." Which way is correct?

Todd Thomason
Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Ed Greenwood replies:

In all cases, it is the map that is in error. Elminster believes that the cartographer was probably Thayan or Chessentian in origin and applied his or her own prejudices about "backward northerners" to the task, representing many large places as small backwaters. Dilpur, Hlammach, Lyrabar, Sarshel, and Tsurlagol are all cities, not towns or villages. Note that "Hlammach" is the correct name. The variant spelling found in Dreams of the Red Wizards *is due to local (Thayan) pronunciation, in which the hard "ach" sound (pronounced "AK-th-hhh") is rendered as a softer "ath."*

The name "Sevone" puzzled Elminster, who muttered, "Sevone? No such place." When I showed him the map from The Bloodstone Lands, *he muttered something darker about the cartographer and said, "That's not 'Sevone,' it's 'Sevenecho,' ye fool!" Sevenecho's surroundings are spoken of in LC2* Inside Ravens Bluff, *in the chapter entitled "The Vast." The RPGA™ Network has a detailed map of The Vast (that is, the eastern coast of the Dragon Reach, from Mulmaster south to the Inner Sea, as far east as King's Reach), which may see print soon.*

Any campaign set in or near this area should be based on the material in Inside Ravens Bluff *and on the "Elminster's Everwinking Eye" columns that appear in POLYHEDRON® Newszine.*

Elminster had more to say about Sevenecho, but Todd forgot to include his address in his letter. If anyone would like to receive the rest of Elminster's priceless information on this city, please send us a self-addressed stamped envelope with a note that it's for information on Sevenecho.

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TWILIGHT'S LAST GLEAMING

by JAMES JACOBS

Where shadows reign, darkness follows.

Artwork by Bob Klasnich

James attends the University of California, Davis, majoring in engineering (although that will soon change to a major in English). He would like to thank Alex Casteneda for help with getting the adventure started, and Knight Smith for spontaneously creating the name Loliadac late one night, and rather shockingly at that! This is James's third appearance in DUNGEON® Adventures.

"Twilight's Last Gleaming" is an AD&D® 2nd Edition adventure for 4-6 player characters of levels 8-10 (about 45 total levels). Although this adventure is not placed in any particular campaign world, some of the monsters encountered are taken from the MC3 FORGOTTEN REALMS® and MC5 GREYHAWK® Adventures appendixes to the *Monstrous Compendium*, and from the 1st Edition *Monster Manual II*.

This adventure stresses role-playing and investigative skills as well as combat skills. Indeed, players who tend to overlook noncombat options may well find things turning out poorly for them. Any mix of character classes and races should find this adventure challenging, although a thief would help the party.

The mountain pass of Twilight Gap, where this adventure starts, may be placed in any temperate mountain range that separates two cities. Although the second part of this adventure takes place in the demi-plane of Shadow, all the information needed in play is provided.

Background

Despite its location in the formidable Aerian Mountains, Twilight Gap was only a minor mountain pass until the cities of Magnamoor and Derapis were founded on opposite sides of the range. Over time, the cities grew large and rich, and the small mountain pass grew in importance as trade between the two cities prospered. Because caravans required two full days to travel through Twilight Gap, the merchant guilds of Magnamoor and Derapis pooled their resources and erected a waystation in the pass. This large inn and watchpost, named Twilight Mansion, had the capacity to provide shelter and food for many traders for a very reasonable price. To insure safety in the gap, a garrison of 24 soldiers was stationed at the outpost. Sir Jeremiah Xhanderghul,

a retired army general, took up the job of overseeing the garrison.

Lately, though, things have not been going well in the gap. Travelers have reported strange and horrible creatures lurking in the shadows of Twilight Gap, and several merchant caravans have been attacked. With each passing day, the beasts grow bolder, and the safety of travelers in the pass diminishes. Sir Xhanderghul and his men are sorely outnumbered. The general has requested more men from Derapis and Magnamoor, but no troops can be sent due to political tensions with neighboring nations.

Nearly all merchant activity through the gap has ceased, and only the boldest or most foolhardy traders now brave the dangers of the pass. The merchants' guilds of both Magnamoor and Derapis are anxious for a solution to the problem. Denied more troops from either city's army, Sir Xhanderghul sent an urgent request to the merchant guilds: Hire a party of adventurers to find out who or what is responsible for this sudden incursion of beasts in Twilight Gap.

For the Dungeon Master

Although the task in Twilight Gap may seem rather straightforward (go to the pass and kill the monsters), all is not as it seems, for Sir Xhanderghul has been possessed by a powerful rakshasas maharajah named Loliadac.

Hundreds of years ago, Loliadac ruled a large clan of rakshasas on one of the lower planes. Loliadac was much more avaricious and chaotic than other rakshasas, and he attempted to rally his clan against the leaders of the plane, a plan doomed to failure. Loliadac and his clan were banished from their home plane to wander for 1,001 years as punishment.

Eventually, Loliadac and his crew came upon the demi-plane of Shadow, where they discovered a fortress occupied by a lone human lich. Due to their immunity to most spells, the rakshasas managed to take the fortress with only two losses. For three centuries, Loliadac and his clan lived in this fortress in the Shadowlands, preying on the surrounding life.

But as time drew on, the rakshasas grew bored with their lives in the Shadowlands. Loliadac had read about the Prime Material plane and its inhabitants in the late lich's library, and he decided it was time to move his clan once again. After a few more days of research, Loliadac discovered the means of creating a *gate* between the Shadowlands and the Prime Material plane. He quickly set his clan to work creating one.

Two hundred years ago, the rakshasas' *gate* opened onto the Prime Material plane deep in Twilight Gap. Loliadac led his clan through the *gate* and quickly established a nearby lair. The clan began to make repeated forays into civilized lands, taking what they wanted and destroying what they did not. For weeks they continued their raids, until finally they met with opposition.

A powerful group of adventurers attacked the rakshasas one night as they returned from a raid. Armed with a potent holy magical item called a *staff of disjoining* (see sidebar), the adventurers surprised the clan and slew many rakshasas before Loliadac and the survivors had a chance to fight back. The battle was furious. Four of the seven adventurers were slain, but the rakshasas took the greater losses. Finally, Loliadac and the last two rakshasas fled through the *gate*. The adventurers pursued the surviving rakshasas, and soon only Loliadac was left.

The adventurers knew that a creature as powerful as Loliadac could not be permanently killed except on his home plane. They used the *staff of disjoining*, which has the power to separate a victim's mind from its body. Once Loliadac's mind had been separated from his body, the adventurers imprisoned him in the depths of his own fortress in the Shadowlands.

One of the two surviving adventurers stayed behind in the Shadowlands, sacrificing his only chance to get home so that he could close the Shadowland end of the *gate* after his companion returned to the Prime Material plane. Once through, the second adventurer buried the Prime Material end of the *gate* under several hundred tons of rock. Loliadac remained imprisoned for hundreds of years—until now.

The recent troubles in Twilight Gap began when a small earthquake uncovered the *gate*. On a routine patrol, one of Sir Xhanderghul's guards came upon the *gate* and accidentally stepped through. Confused and afraid, the guard approached a nearby fortress looking for help.

The guard entered the fortress and

Staff of Disjoining

Records of how to construct this powerful staff have been lost in antiquity, although it seems certain to require the aid of a high-level cleric. This type of staff is unadorned, resembling a gnarled walking stick. Religious in nature, a *staff of disjoining* may be used only by a priest of the appropriate alignment (see below).

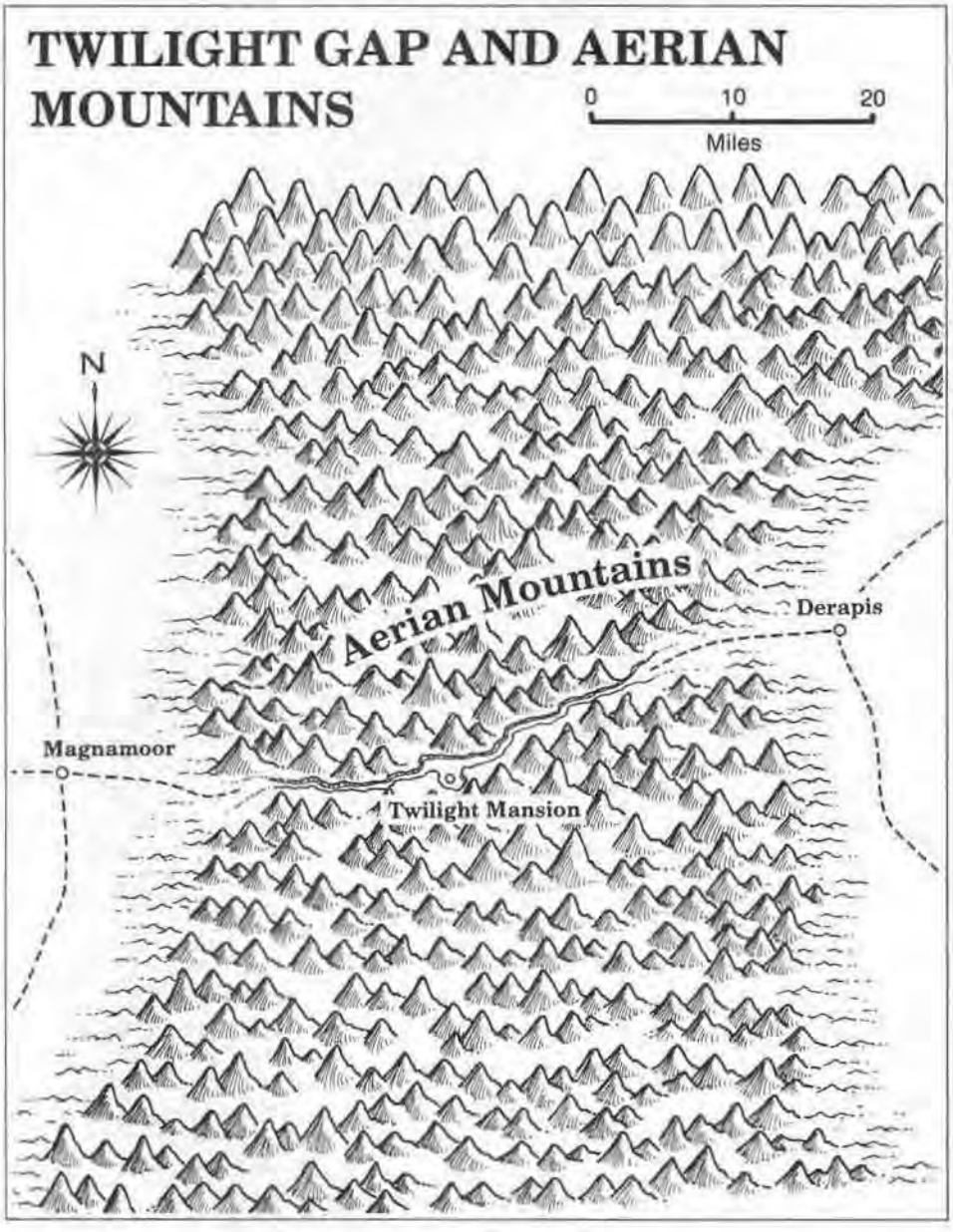
A *staff of disjoining* has two powers. At the cost of one charge, the staff may inflict *feeblemindedness* (as per the spell) on any being it hits. The staff's primary power, however, is much more awesome. At the cost of two charges (more may be spent for greater effect if the user so desires), the user may attempt to *disjoin* any being hit, separating the victim's body from its mind. The victim must be hit by the staff and is allowed a saving throw vs. wands at −2 to avoid the effect.

If the saving throw fails, the victim's body and mind enter a state of suspended animation for a number of turns equal to the number of charges spent. When the disjoining ceases, the victim returns to his normal state.

If the user of the staff is a high priest, he may opt to permanently disjoin the target. The target must first be disjoined by the staff in the normal way. Then the high priest speaks a special command word and the staff floats into the air, maintaining the state of disjunction in the target until the staff is moved by an outside force.

Each *staff of disjoining* has a specific alignment. Only beings of the same morals as the staff (good, neutral, or evil) may disturb a floating staff. Others who attempt to do may conclude that the staff is illusory; hands or objects pass through it. If the staff is touched or bumped by a being of the same morals, there is a 75% chance that either the mind or the body of the disjoined being is released (50% chance for each). If the staff is grasped, both are released.

The act of permanently disjoining a target uses up all of the staff's remaining charges. Temporarily disjoining a target does not require the staff to remain in place and may be done any number of times, depending on the staff's total charges. These staves cannot be recharged. The *staff of disjoining* found in this adventure has an alignment of lawful good.



discovered Loliadac's prison—a large underground chamber that contained his body and disjoined mind, held in stasis by the floating *staff of disjoining*. The obviously magical item seemed the most likely object to help him get home, and the guard unwittingly freed Loliadac's mind the instant he grasped the staff.

Once his mind was free, Loliadac promptly possessed the guard's body. However, he was unable to free his own material body from the prison, because the *staff of disjoining* was still floating in place and no evil being (or any being corrupted by evil) could touch the holy item.

Loliadac decided to return to the Prime Material plane to get someone else to free his body. When he returned to Twilight Gap, Loliadac possessed Sir Xhanderghul, disposing of the guard quietly as soon as he did so. In his new-found position of power, Loliadac knew it would be easy to find some willing but unknowing servants to free his body.

Loliadac has reopened the *gate* at both ends, allowing all sorts of horrible beasts to wander in from the Shadowlands. He intends to hire a party to travel to his fortress on the Shadowlands to put a stop to this menace, telling them that the removal of a powerful evil relic (actually the *staff of disjoining*) will end the danger and close the *gate*. In fact, this action will free the rakshasa maharajah's body from its prison, unleashing him on the Prime Material plane once again.

Starting the Adventure

The adventurers are traveling to either Derapis or Magnamoor, on business of their own. As they approach the city, they encounter a lone merchant on the road who asks them if they have come to rid Twilight Gap of the evil creatures infesting it. If the PCs show any interest, the merchant directs them to the merchants' guild in the city. If the PCs appear hesitant, the merchant hints at the possibility of a generous reward from the guild if the party succeeds.

If the adventurers are interested in obtaining more information, they have no trouble finding the merchants' guildhall, a large, three-story building that overlooks the city marketplace. When they enter and make their business known, the PCs are escorted to the guildmaster's office on the third floor. Read or paraphrase the following:

> The guildmaster beckons you to sit opposite his desk in several large, plush chairs. He seems to be in a cheerful mood. Nevertheless, there are deep lines of worry in his face. As you settle into your chairs, he begins to speak.
>
> "Welcome to our city, brave adventurers! I am Stephen Rammargin, merchants' guildmaster. I wish this were a better time for us to meet, but times are hard of late. I have been told that you may be interested in helping us with our problem. Before you decide, let me tell you all I know of the matter.
>
> "As you approached the city, you doubtless noticed the Aerian Mountains. Rugged and treacherous, they would pose a major obstacle to this city's trade routes if it were not for Twilight Gap. Thanks to this pass, we are able to trade with cities on the other side of the mountains. It's a two-day trip through the pass, but it is—or was—a safe journey due to the presence of Twilight Mansion. We

built this outpost as a watchtower and as an inn for the travelers in the pass.

"Lately, though, the efforts of the soldiers stationed in the pass have been inadequate, for there has been a massive incursion of horrible beings into the gap. With each passing day these beasts grow bolder, and the pass grows more dangerous. The man in charge of Twilight Mansion, Sir Jeremiah Xhanderghul, has requested more soldiers from both Magnamoor and Derapis to help chase off the beasts, but neither city can spare any men at this time. In the meantime, all caravan travel through the pass has stopped.

"Naturally, we are getting anxious for a solution to the problem. Sir Xhanderghul and his men have their hands full trying to keep the creatures contained in the pass. I don't want to think about what might happen if they start coming down to the plains. Sir Xhanderghul has asked me to find and hire a small party of adventurers who are willing to enter the pass and find out who or what is responsible for this sudden influx of beasts.

"If you are interested, travel to Twilight Mansion and speak with Sir Xhanderghul about what he has learned. Then do what you have to do to make Twilight Gap safe. If you are successful, I am prepared to offer each of you a generous reward. What do you say?"

Stephen is willing to discuss the terms of the reward. He is willing to offer the PCs 3,000 gp each for this job. If the PCs discover the true state of affairs in the gap and still manage to set things right, he increases the reward to 6,000 gp each. Shrewd bargaining could also bring his initial offer up an additional 3,000 gp in total.

If the PCs agree to undertake this quest, Stephen thanks them profusely and provides them with a copy of the Twilight Gap and Aerian Mountains map, showing the route to the outpost. He also gives the PCs a writ of discount that allows them to purchase goods and services in the city at half price.

Stephen allows the PCs to stay in the guildhouse overnight, so that they may leave for the gap first thing in the morning. If the PCs do not have mounts, he can supply them with no more than two draft horses and six riding horses. These are on loan and must be returned at the end of the adventure. The PCs are not held responsible for any horses killed during the course of the adventure unless Stephen suspects that such losses could have been avoided.

Stephen Rammargin, merchants' guildmaster: AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level human; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 13; unarmed.

Draft horse: INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SZ L; ML 6; MC1 (Horse).

Riding horse: INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; HD 2; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1-2/1-2; SZ L; ML 7; MC1 (Horse).

Both Magnamoor and Derapis are large towns, each with a population of about 8,000. Each city has at its center a large marketplace where the PCs can equip themselves. Most of the equipment in the *Player's Handbook* can be found in either city, at the DM's discretion.

None of the citizens in either city know much about Twilight Gap's history. Each city has a small library in which the adventurers can conduct research. Such research takes at least half a day and uncovers only a few interesting stories. These tales tell of beasts that used to live in the gap but were banished to the Abyss by a group of adventurers 200 years ago. The PCs cannot learn of Loliadac and his clan of rakshasas or of the *staff of disjoining.* To learn more, they must travel to Twilight Mansion.

The Journey to Twilight Mansion

The Aerian Mountains are temperate, and their peaks average about 6,000'. All the mountaintops are snow-capped during winter, and most of them are snow-capped year round. The mountains are treacherous to traverse due to natural hazards, but dangerous monsters and humanoids are generally kept at a minimum. The foothills and the lower parts of the mountains are lightly forested with evergreens and underbrush. Treat the Aerians as high mountains for purposes of movement (see pages 124-125 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details).

Traveling through the mountains should not be a problem for the PCs, though, because they will probably not leave Twilight Gap. The pass itself is never above 1,000' in elevation. The gap is well traveled and well kept, and should be treated as rolling hills for movement.

During this adventure, the PCs find wandering monsters and set encounters. Random encounters in Twilight Gap include a few natural species and a large number of beasts from the Shadowlands. No encounters occur until the PCs are actually in the gap.

Exploring Twilight Gap

Use the Twilight Gap and Aerian Mountains map to keep track of the party's movement in the pass. This map is intentionally vague, so that it can be shown to the players during play. When the party nears Twilight Mansion and when they go looking for the *gate* to the Shadowlands, use the Twilight Mansion and Environs map. There are three encounter areas labeled on this map, each of which is described below. In addition, detailed maps of Twilight Mansion (area A) are provided.

A. Twilight Mansion. The only thing that seems to be wrong with Twilight Mansion is the lack of activity here. The place is nearly deserted; only Xhanderghul, 17 soldiers, and a few servants remain. Actually, lack of staff is the least of Twilight Mansion's problems.

Sir Xhanderghul was possessed by the rakshasa Loliadac about three weeks ago. Since then, Loliadac has managed to gain control of Sir Xhanderghul's men by using *geas* spells. By the time the PCs get to the outpost, all of the guards and servants are affected by *geas* spells. They have been commanded to do their jobs as usual, and to follow Sir Xhanderghul's orders to the letter. The guards and servants are neither aware that they are under the influence of a *geas* nor suspicious of Sir Xhanderghul.

There are four buildings on the grounds of the outpost. The largest is the inn itself, a solid building two stories tall. The exterior is painted tan with dark brown trim and has slate shingles. Behind the inn and out of sight behind a few trees are the other three buildings of the outpost: the barracks, the stable, and a small outhouse. These three rough buildings are unpainted, built to last, and not at all showy.

Encounters in Twilight Gap

Roll for encounters four times a day: morning, noon, evening, and midnight. A roll of 1 on 1d10 indicates an encounter occurs; roll 1d8 + 1d12 and consult the table below. Several Shadowlands creatures cannot abide bright light or intense darkness. Encounters marked with an asterisk occur only in the morning or evening, when the shadows are deepest. If a marked encounter is rolled at noon or midnight, reroll.

2: **Shadelings*** (1-3): INT average; AL NE; AC 0; MV 18; HD special; THAC0 nil; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA duplication; SD immune to physical damage and most spells when in natural form; SZ special; ML 19; XP variable; new monster (see page 25). These shadelings are new arrivals on the Prime Material plane and have not yet taken physical form. They try to duplicate the strongest PCs and then attempt to slay the party.

3: **Cloakers** (1-3): INT high; AL CN; AC 3 (1); MV 1, fly 15 (D); HD 6; THAC0 13; #AT 2 plus special; Dmg 1-6/1-6 plus special; SA engulfing, moan; SD shadow shifting; SZ L; ML 13; XP 1,400; MC3. These cloakers do not like the Prime Material plane, but they are hungry enough to stalk PCs and attack from behind at the earliest opportunity.

4: **Slow shadows*** (4-16): INT low; AL CE; AC 8; MV 12; HD 4; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA slow, surprise; SD +2 or better weapon to hit; immune to cold, lightning, *hold*, and *charm*; SZ M; ML special; XP 650; MC5. These slow shadows try to attack by surprise.

5: **Displacer beasts** (2-5): INT semi; AL N; AC 4; MV 15; HD 6; THAC0 15; #AT 2; Dmg 2-8/2-8; SD −2 on opponent's attack roll, save as 12th-level fighter with a +2 bonus; SZ L; ML 14; XP 975; MC1. These beasts actually like the Prime Material plane better than the demi-plane of Shadows. They are hungry and attack at once.

6: **Shadelings** (1-4): These shadelings have already taken material forms; they should be treated as the beings they appear to be, with the differences noted in the shadeling description on page 25. Roll again on this table to determine the shadelings forms, rerolling results of 2, 6, 17, and 20.

7: **Mountain lions** (1-2): INT semi; AL N; AC 6; MV 12; HD 3 + 1; THAC0 17; #AT 3; Dmg 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA rear claws for 1-4 each; SD surprised only on a 1; SZ M; ML 5; XP 175; MC1 (Cats, great). These native mountain lions are very skittish because of all the unnatural beings in the area. They avoid the party, attacking only if cornered.

8: **Common vultures** (4-24): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 3, fly 27 (E); HD 1 + 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SZ S; ML 5; XP 65; MC3. If this encounter occurs during evening or at night, it is with a swarm of:

Common bats (1-100): INT animal; AL N; AC 8; MV 1, fly 24 (B); HD 1-2 hp; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA swarming; SZ T; ML 3; XP 15; MC1.

Both types of animals watch the party, attacking only if cornered.

9-13: **Patrol** (1-8): AL NG; AC 4; MV 9; F1; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 14; chain mail, shield, long sword, dagger, long bow, 20 arrows. This patrol of Sir Xhanderghul's men has been *geased* by Loliadac (see area A). If encountered before the party reaches Twilight Mansion, the patrolmen greet the PCs and offer to escort them to the outpost. If encountered after the PCs have reached the outpost and spoken with Sir Xhanderghul/Loliadac, the soldiers wish the party luck and move on.

14: **Merchants** (2-8): AL LN; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 7; short swords. These hardy merchants have decided that they would rather make the trek through the gap than let their source of income fade away. They are very skittish and will beg the party to escort them through the gap, or at least to Twilight Mansion. Treat this as no encounter if it is rolled while the PCs are traveling to or from the *gate* (area C) to the south of the outpost.

15: **Poisonous snakes** (1-6): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 15; HD 2 + 1; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA poison; SZ S; ML 4; XP 175; MC1. The snakes of the valley sense the presence of creatures from the Shadowlands and are very subdued. They attack only in self defense.

16: **Shadows*** (2-20): INT low; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3 + 3; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5 plus special; SA strength drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells; immune to cold-based attacks; SZ M; ML special; XP 650; MC1. These shadows attack the party on sight, fighting to the death.

17: **Alvyn Gallak**, madman: AL N; AC 10; MV 3 (due to injury); 0-level human; hp 2 (5 normally); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2 (fists); ML 3. This encounter occurs only once.

Alvyn was a successful merchant until his caravan encountered a group of shadelings, the day after the *gate* to the Shadowlands was opened. Alvyn was the only survivor of the encounter, and the spectacle of the very shadows of his friends attacking him drove him mad. He now has an overriding fear of shadows, and he tries to venture out only on overcast days. His insanity is so complete, though, that he figures that merely covering his eyes when there are shadows about is enough protection from them. He sprained his ankle while running from the scene of the battle and can barely walk.

When the party encounters Alvyn, he is huddling in some low bushes with his hands clamped tightly over his eyes. Alvyn accidentally stumbled into the shrubbery, and the abundance of shadows there frightened him into paralyzation. He doesn't speak unless he is forcibly removed from the bushes, at which time he opens his eyes experimentally and instantly moves to some open area free of shadows.

Alvyn is thoroughly insane and babbles about "man-eating shadows" and similar horrors, always keeping an eye out for advancing shadows of any sort. Even if cured of his affliction (by a *heal*, *restoration*, or similar spell), he will still be afraid of shadows, but the fear will be controlled. If cured, he will desire nothing more than to flee from the gap.

Alvyn does not know of Loliadac's presence in the gap, but he has seen Sathric the shadow dragon (see encounter 20) flying overhead. One of the first things he says to the party is "Beware the flying lizard shadow! He's the worst of all!"

18: **Shadow mastiffs*** (4-16): INT semi; AL N(E); AC 6; MV 18 (9 in bright light); HD 4 (−1 hp/die in bright light); hp 20 each (16 each in bright light); THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SA baying causes panic and the discarding of all handheld items for all who hear and do not save vs. spells (add a +1 bonus to the roll for each mastiff less than 10 mastiffs, but for every two mastiffs over 12, subtract one from the roll); SD hide in shadows 40%; SZ M; ML 15; XP 420; MM2/84. In bright light, these doglike shadows lose 50% of their movement rate and cannot hide in shadows. They try to make the PCs panic by howling from a safe distance, moving in for the kill if they are successful.

19: **Tenebrous worm:** INT animal; AL N; AC 1; MV 10; HD 10; hp 42; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SA acid; SD poison bristles; SZ M; ML 13; XP 5,000; MC2 (Worm). This tenebrous worm would rather let the PCs pass, but if molested it attacks at once. Shining any light on the worm counts as molesting it, so if the worm is met during daylight, it automatically attacks the PCs.

20: **Sathric,*** juvenile shadow dragon: If this encounter occurs before Loliadac has a chance to talk to him, Sathric watches the PCs from the shadows, sizing them up but not attacking. If discovered, he quickly returns to his lair (area B). If Sathric is encountered after Loliadac talks to him but before the party enters the Shadowlands, he silently follows the PCs to make sure that they enter the *gate* (see area B for statistics).

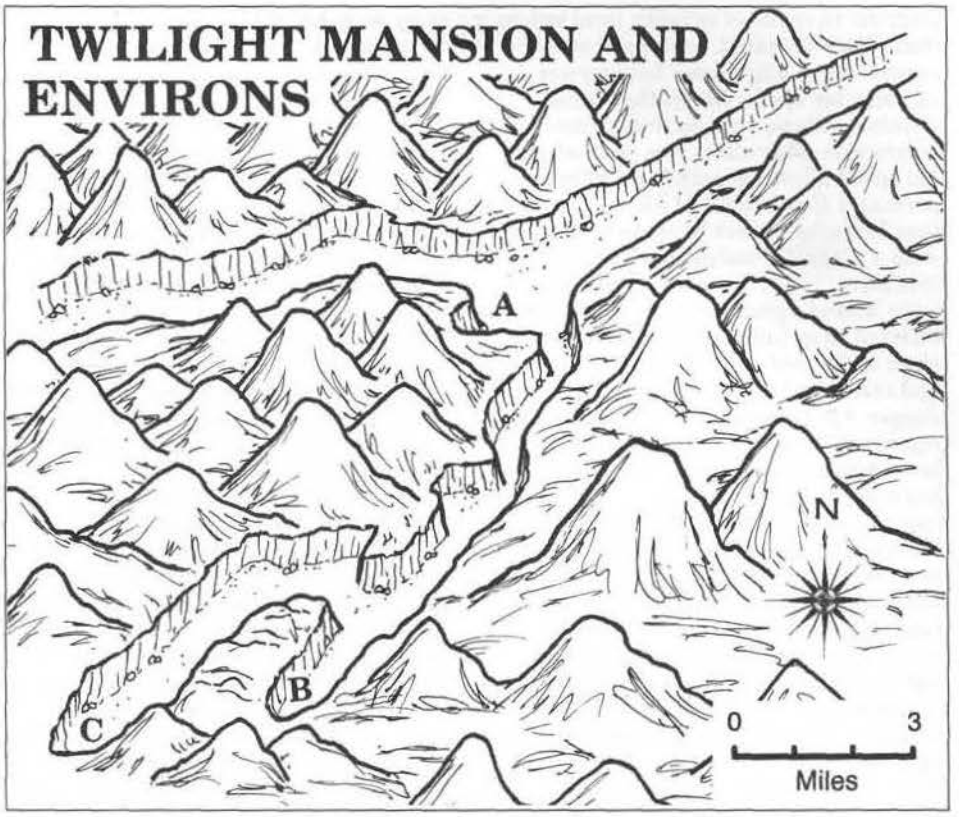
Three guard greet the PCs as they approach, unless they already have an escort. The guards ask the adventurers' business in Twilight Gap. They are suspicious at first, but as soon as they learn of the PCs' purpose in coming to the outpost, they become excited and happy. The PCs are expected, the guards say, and Sir Xhanderghul wishes to speak with them at once. The party is escorted to Twilight Mansion's library (area A5) and asked to wait while one of the guards fetches Sir Xhanderghul.

After about five minutes, Sir Xhanderghul enters the library to greet the PCs. Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

"Welcome to Twilight Mansion; I am Jeremiah Xhanderghul, and I thank you for coming to aid us in our time of need. As you have no doubt heard, this mountain pass has recently been under siege by strange and horrible creatures. Indeed, you may have seen some of these beings already. If so, you know that we are sorely outnumbered and outclassed. This is why I called for you.

"About ten miles to the southwest, there is a strange obelisk of dull gray metal that was apparently unearthed by a recent earthquake. One of my men discovered this obelisk about a week ago. Through the use of various magical spells, a wizard I employed named Mathew Servenson managed to learn that this obelisk is in fact a two-way gate to the demi-plane of Shadow, and these monsters are apparently emerging from this gate. Furthermore, we have discovered the probable cause of this gate, and through this, a possible cure.

"We have not been able to learn much about why this gate has suddenly appeared. Apparently, there is a small fortress on the demi-plane of Shadow, not far from where the gate opens out onto the Shadowlands. This fortress harbors the cause of our worries: a powerful magical relic that has somehow been triggered, causing this gate to open. We were not able to divine the object's exact appearance or powers, but we were able to discover that, in order to close this gate, someone has to enter the fortress and find this relic. I hope there will be some sort of clue in the fortress as to how to close the gate.



"I have already sent a group of five of my men through the gate in an attempt to do just this, but they have not yet returned. And so I sent for you. In order to restore safety to Twilight Gap, someone has to travel to the Shadowlands, find the magical item that triggered this gate, and bring this item safely back through the gate so it can be examined more thoroughly.

"What do you say?"

Of course, almost nothing of what Loliadac tells the PCs is totally true. In fact, the relic he refers to is the *staff of disjoining*, which is the only thing imprisoning Loliadac's body. Its removal will not close the *gate*, but it will free Loliadac to roam the world at will.

Sir Xhanderghul is about 46 years old. His dark brown hair is just beginning to gray on the sides, as is his beard. He stands 6'4" tall and weighs about 240 lbs. His friends know him to be kind, forgiving, and jovial, but deadly serious in times of need. Of course, Sir Xhanderghul is currently controlled by Loliadac. The essence of Sir Xhanderghul can sense and perceive everything that is happening around him, but he can't do anything about it as long as Loliadac is in charge.

Loliadac knows all about Sir Xhanderghul's history and personality through the use of his *ESP* ability, and he is able to mimic the lord with near-perfect accuracy. In any case, he tries to speak as little as possible, so as to reduce the chances of revealing his true nature.

Sir Xhanderghul: AL NG; AC 0; MV 12; F12; hp 88; THAC0 9; #AT 3/2; Dmg by weapon type; S 18/97, D 16, C 16, I 12, W 13, Ch 17; ML 16.

Sir Xhanderghul (while possessed): AL CE; AC 0; MV 12; HD 13+39; hp 129; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA spells, *ESP*, illusions; SD spells, spell immunity; S 18/97, D 16, C 16, I 15, W 16, Ch 17; ML 19; XP 10,000.

As long as Loliadac is forced to operate in this state, much of his power as a rakshasa is lessened. He can cast spells normally and retains his *illusion* and limited *ESP* powers, but he loses his invulnerability to damage from nonmagical weaponry. In addition, he is

immune to spells of seventh level or less that affect the mind, such as *charm person, know alignment, hold person,* and similar spells. Spells that cause physical effects, such as *fireball* and *polymorph other* affect him normally. All spells above seventh level affect him normally. One benefit of his new form is that Loliadac cannot be instantly slain with a *blessed* crossbow bolt while in this state.

Sir Xhanderghul/Loliadac (hereafter referred to as Loliadac) wears a suit of *elven chain mail +3* under his clothing, and carries a *bastard sword +3* and a *dagger +2*. On his left hand is a *ring of regeneration,* and in a pouch at his belt he carries a *ring of invisibility.* Loliadac has other magical items stashed in his room (area A23) and will retrieve them if they are needed and if he has the time to do so. Loliadac is a 9th-level priest and a 13th-level wizard. He has memorized the following priest spells: *command, darkness, entangle* (×2), *pass without trace, protection from good; charm person or mammal* (×2), *hold person* (×2), *silence 15' radius* (×2); *call lightning, cause blindness, dispel magic; giant insect, poison; slay living.* His memorized mage spells include: *audible glamer, magic missile, shocking grasp, unseen servant, ventriloquism; irritation, Melf's Acid Arrow, ray of enfeeblement, stinking cloud, web; fireball, lightning bolt, sepia snake sigil, suggestion, vampiric touch; emotion, enervation, phantasmal killer, polymorph other; demi-shadow monsters, domination, shadow magic, teleport; guards and wards, shades.*

Loliadac does everything he can to keep up his story. He is walking a thin line between giving the PCs too much or too little information. He wants to tell them enough so that they go to the Shadowlands, disrupt the *staff of disjoining,* and free his body, but he doesn't want to arouse their suspicions. After briefing them, he answers any questions they have. Listed below are some likely questions, along with Loliadac's answers.

"What kind of beings have come through this gate?" Loliadac tells the PCs that most of the beings are intelligent shadows of wildly varying shapes and powers. There are many shadows of the normal undead variety, as well as shadowy monsters unlike anything he has seen before.

"Can you or some of your men accompany us to help?" Loliadac will not agree to either of these requests, stating that all available manpower is needed to keep the beasts contained in the pass and to protect the waystation.

"Can we speak with the soldier who discovered the gate?" Loliadac appears saddened and answers that the man was one in the patrol that went through the *gate* and never returned. In fact, Loliadac killed this soldier as soon as the rakshasa took over Sir Xhanderghul, burying the body in the wine cellar in the basement (area A24).

"How do you know so much about this gate?" Loliadac states that the wizard he employs divined the information through magic.

"Can we speak with this wizard?" Again, Loliadac seems saddened. He tells the PCs that Mathew is not well. Apparently, one of his divination spells backfired and plunged him into a state of catatonia. He asks that the PCs not reveal this to the soldiers, as it would only demoralize them further. In reality, Loliadac killed Mathew and hid his body in the Shadowlands, replacing him in his room with a *permanent illusion* of a catatonic mage. For more details, see area A22.

"Do you know anything about the history of Twilight Gap?" Loliadac states that he does not know anything important about the history of the area.

After the PCs finish asking questions, Loliadac asks them when they will be ready to head off for the *gate,* telling them, "The sooner, the better!" If the PCs wish, Loliadac is more than willing to let them rest, memorize spells, and otherwise prepare for the mission, and he will give each PC a room on the second floor of the inn to aid in this. Loliadac sees the PCs to their rooms and then excuses himself to go to his chambers under the pretense of being tired and needing sleep.

Of course, this is just another lie. While the PCs sleep, Loliadac intends to sneak out of the outpost (using his *ring of invisibility*) to a secret meeting with Sathric the shadow dragon (see area B). Last night, Loliadac saw the dragon spying on the outpost and feels that such a beast would be a perfect accomplice in his plans. During the meeting, Loliadac talks Sathric into keeping an eye on the party the next day, if he sees them, and making sure that they go through the *gate* (area C) as planned. If the PCs figure out what is really going on, Sathric agrees to help Loliadac kill them.

Loliadac speaks with Sathric for about two hours. The PCs are free to spend these two hours in any way they like. The PCs can find several clues to the real situation in Twilight Mansion if they explore it. If the party attempts to learn anything through the use of spells such as *divination* or *contact other plane,* the DM should be as vague as possible so as not to give away too many secrets too early. Remember that scrying on Loliadac is virtually impossible, due to his spell immunity.

Each of the rooms in Twilight Mansion is detailed below. Ceiling height in most of the rooms is 10'. Each room contains one or more small lanterns with *continual light* spells cast inside to light the room during the night.

First Floor

A1. Entrance. The floor of this area is made of marble and covered with a large rug near the door where guests wipe their feet. Guests check in here when the waystation is busy. A small desk sits by the entrance, with a large guest book lying open on it. Currently, all of the servants of Twilight Mansion (including those normally attending this desk) are in their chambers, as there is no work to be done (see area A10).

A2. Great Hall. This area is thickly carpeted and open to the second floor. Many paintings hang on the walls. If the adventurers care to look, they can find both a portrait of Sir Xhanderghul and a portrait of Mathew Servenson. The portraits are expertly crafted, and nothing out of the ordinary appears in them.

A3. Supply Rooms. These rooms are all similar and contain firewood, cleaning instruments, bed linen, clothing, and other mundane items. There is nothing of interest in any of them. Four of these rooms are on the second floor.

A4. Lavatories. These rooms contain only the necessary equipment and are unremarkable.

A5. Library. The library's collection includes all sorts of books ranging from faerie tales to scientific treatises. There are no magical books, and there are no books of local history.

A6. Trophy Hall. This room contains displays from Sir Xhanderghul's younger years: weapons, suits of armor, a few stuffed animal heads, and so on. One suit of armor in the northwest corner is of particular interest. This suit of man-sized plate mail is nonmagical, but it is so well crafted that it is only half as encumbering as normal plate mail. Sir Xhanderghul polished this armor each day before he was possessed, but the suit is gathering dust now.

A7. Conservatory. This large room contains all sorts of musical instruments: a large harp, an organ, and several smaller instruments. There is nothing else of interest here.

A8. Foyer. This side entrance is used to load and unload supplies.

A9. Pantry. This area is lined wall to wall with foodstuffs. Some of the food is beginning to spoil, due to the lack of business lately. There is a large door in the west wall that provides access to the cellar of Twilight Mansion. This door is locked.

A10. Servants' Quarters. These two barrackslike chambers house the cooks, maids, and other attendants of Twilight Mansion. Many of the servants have left for safer parts, but a few loyal men and women remain. There are five men in the east room, and four women in the west. They have all been *geased* by Loliadac and know nothing of interest. They have been ordered to not speak to the PCs except as necessary for efficiency and politeness. Now that no guests are staying in the inn, the servants keep to their rooms when they are not cleaning or eating.

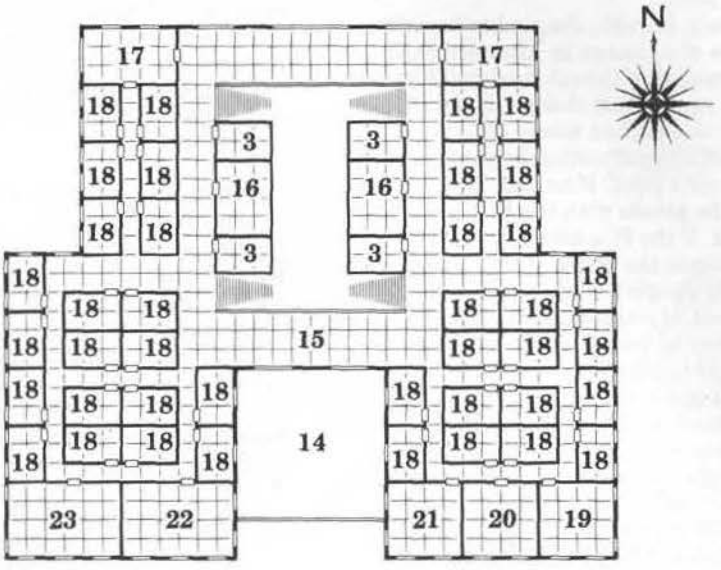
Servants (9): AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; 0-level humans; hp 3 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 7.

A11. Kitchen. This room is still used to prepare meals for Sir Xhanderghul and his men. In addition, for the past eight years, it has been the home of a single killmoulis named Jengle. Before the *gate* to the plane of Shadows opened, this mischievous little critter would take great delight in playing jokes on the cooks, such as stealing small items of food or putting dirt in the soup.

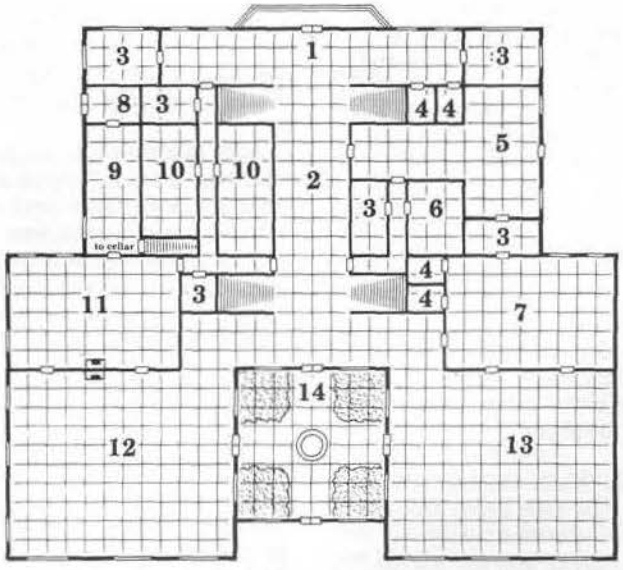
All this time, it managed to avoid being caught or even seen by anyone except Sir Xhanderghul, with whom it

TWILIGHT MANSION
Area A

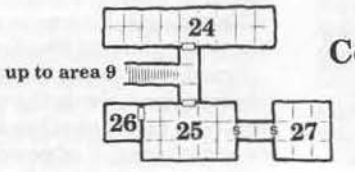
1 square = 5'



Second Floor



First Floor



Cellar

formed a friendship. Sir Xhanderghul made sure there were enough food scraps left around for the killmoulis, and in return Jengle kept Sir Xhanderghul informed of any problems in the work force.

Lately, though, Jengle has become aware of a change in Xhanderghul's personality, although he doesn't knows what caused this change. If the PCs enter the kitchen alone, Jengle tries to attract their attention by pushing a plate off a shelf. If he gets their attention, he pleads with the PCs to help his friend. If the PCs attack him, he retreats into the walls. If the party agrees to help Jengle's friend (Sir Xhanderghul, of course), he helps them in any way he can. It is up to the individual DM to determine how much Jengle knows about the current situation and how much he can help the PCs. He has no treasure.

Jengle, killmoulis: INT average; AL N (CG); AC 6; MV 15; HD ½; hp 3; THAC0 20; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SD 10% detectable; SZ T; ML 7; MC2.

A12. Dining Room. This room has not been used lately, as the servants and soldiers have all been eating in their chambers. Two chandeliers hang above the two large tables that fill this room. Each chandelier holds two dozen lit candles. Upon close inspection, the PCs can discover that these candles give off no heat at all, as they have been enchanted with Mathew's variant of the *continual light* spell.

A13. Ballroom. The floor and ceiling of this room are made of polished oak. A large platform dominates the west end of this room. This stage is used by performers during social gatherings in the inn. The room is empty.

A14. Garden. While the rest of Twilight Mansion may look fancy and elegant, this room looks absolutely stunning. The ceiling and the north wall of this room are made of *glassteel,* as is the door to the north. The room serves as a garden, with lush greenery growing about the corners and reaching almost to the ceiling. Gravel paths cross the chamber to a central wishing well surrounded by three benches. A gentle breeze wafts through the chamber, and the temperature is always warm and pleasant.

Second Floor

A15. Balcony. This hallway overlooks the great hall, the garden, and the front grounds of the outpost. Hanging at various points on the walls here are some of Sir Xhanderghul's old weapons: six swords, three halberds, and two daggers. None of the weapons are magical, although they are all extremely well made and do +1 hp damage on a successful hit.

A16. Lounges. Each of these thickly carpeted rooms contains a large sofa, a few chairs, a table, and a small shelf of books. There is a small end table next to the sofa in each room.

A17. Guest Rooms. These two rooms are for those rich enough to afford them. Aside from lavish decoration and furnishings, there is nothing of interest in them.

A18. Guest Rooms. These rooms are clean but spartan, with only a minimum of furnishings. There are currently no guests staying in any of the rooms.

A19-A21. Suites. These rooms can accommodate up to four people each. Loliadac places the PCs in these rooms. There is nothing of interest here.

A22. Mathew's Chambers. A small "Do Not Disturb" sign hangs on this door. Loliadac has placed a *wizard lock* (at 13th level) on the door to insure that the sign's command is heeded. If the adventurers manage to get in anyway, they find a cluttered room littered with scrolls; this is obviously the den of a wizard. A figure is asleep in a large bed in one corner of the room.

If the PCs have seen the portraits in the great hall (area A2) they can recognize the sleeper as Mathew Servenson. No amount of noise wakes him, though, for this is not actually Mathew, but a *permanent illusion* of him placed here by Loliadac. Loliadac killed Mathew in his sleep after he possessed Sir Xhanderghul, then hid Mathew's body and all his magical items in the fortress on the demi-plane of Shadow (area 14).

Scrolls and books cover tables and shelves throughout the chamber. The disarray includes other wizardly items: ceramic pots full of powders; small crystals; lumps of minerals; desiccated animal skins; writing instruments; totem carvings; and bits of horn, scale, and shell.

Any wizard who looks through this room for at least one turn and makes an intelligence check realizes that Mathew was undoubtedly a conjurer and could not have cast the divination spells mentioned by "Sir Xhanderghul." Loliadac is unaware of this, and if asked about it, he will be visibly confused and surprised. He thinks quickly, though, and maintains that the wizard's divination equipment must have been stolen.

If Loliadac is also asked about the *illusion* of Mathew or the absence of magical items and spell books, he seems even more confused. He will, however, stick to his story that someone or something must have broken into Mathew's room, stolen the magical items, and kidnapped or killed Mathew, leaving an *illusion* of him to throw off pursuit. Loliadac tries to use this story to push the PCs into going to the Shadowlands as soon as possible. Who knows? They may be next to be killed by this unknown assailant!

A23. Sir Xhanderghul's Chambers. This room obviously houses a warrior. Weapons hang from the walls, and army uniforms and shields adorn the corners of the room. The chamber is filthy and has no organization whatsoever, as Loliadac has neither the time nor the desire to keep it orderly.

If the PCs search the room, they find a small sack thrown under the bed. Inside this sack is Loliadac's *helm of teleportation,* which he keeps here when he isn't using it to *teleport* to Sathric's lair (area B) or the *gate* (area C). Sir Xhanderghul's *rug of welcome* is spread out just beyond the door. When he possessed the general, Loliadac learned the command words for the rug, and he will not hesitate to use it if combat breaks out in here. There is nothing else in this chamber pertinent to the adventure.

Cellar

Loliadac knows that there is incriminating evidence in the basement, and he has *wizard locked* (at 13th level) every door here (including the secret ones).

A24. Wine Cellar. This long room is jammed with racks of wine bottles. Some of the contents are very valuable, but none of the wine in here has been opened since the *gate* appeared. This is

where Loliadac buried the corpse of the guard he possessed in the Shadowlands.

If the PCs search this room, their chances of finding the shallow grave are equal to their chances of finding a secret door. If the guard's body is exhumed, the cause of death will be revealed as a deep knife wound to the throat. If a *speak with dead* spell is used on the corpse, it screams and wails the words, "The shadows! The shadows in my brain!" over and over, providing no other information.

If Loliadac is confronted with this body, he appears confused and startled, and will claim to know nothing about how it got there, blaming it on the influx of monsters into the gap.

A25. Laboratory. This large room used to be Mathew's laboratory for both spell research and magical-item creation. There are scores of books and scrolls pertinent to such pursuits on the shelves that line the north and west walls, although none of the books are actually magical and none are spell books (those have all been taken to the Shadowlands by Loliadac).

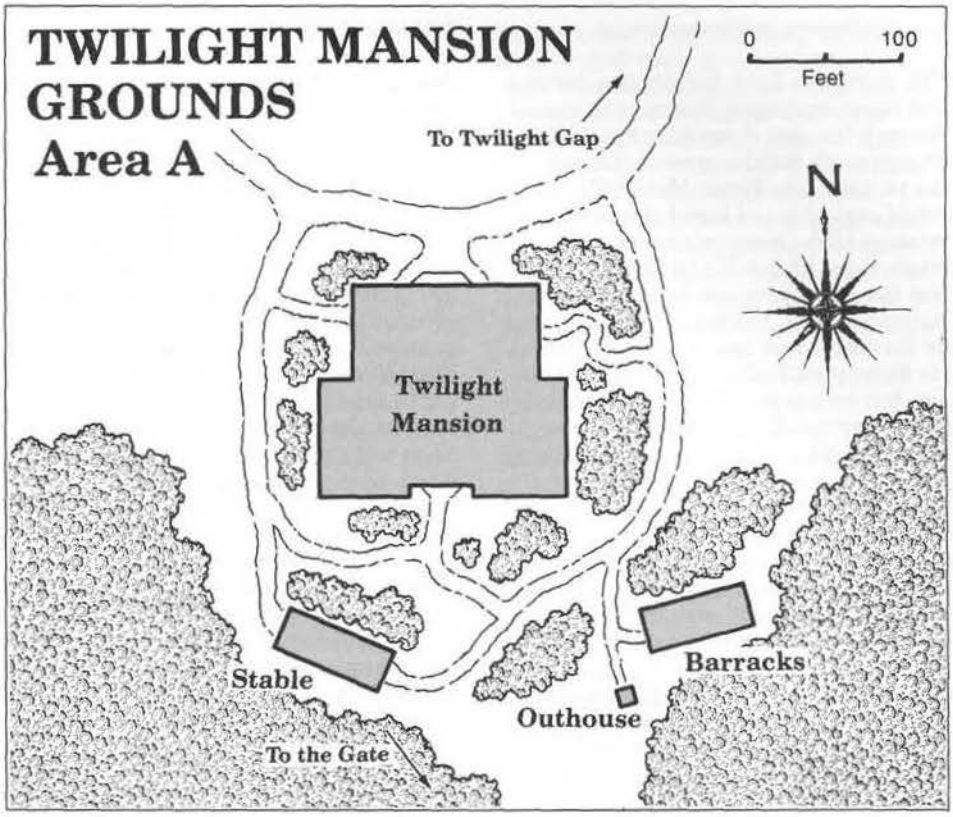
The small magical circles engraved on the floor of this room prove that Mathew was indeed a conjurer. Behind a large bookshelf against the west wall is a secret door that leads to the inn's vault (area A27). This secret door used to be *wizard locked*, but Loliadac dispelled this spell and transferred the contents of the vault to his fortress in the Shadowlands.

A26. Component Storage Room. This small room is lined with shelves full of spell components, although all components of value have been relocated to the Shadowlands by Loliadac. There is nothing of interest here.

A27. Vault. The door to this room is locked but not trapped. Loliadac keeps the key on his person at all times. Normally, this chamber is used to store all of Twilight Mansion's income and ready cash. Currently, all that can be found in here is dust and cobwebs. A few weeks ago, Loliadac relocated all of the cash he found in here to his fortress in the Shadowlands.

The Mansion Grounds

If the PCs investigate the grounds, refer to the Twilight Mansion Grounds Map.



The stables contain 18 nervous riding horses. The outhouse is likewise unremarkable.

There are from 3-12 soldiers in the barracks. If the PCs question them about Sir Xhanderghul, the DM should remember that these men have all been *geased* to follow Loliadac's orders. They all agree that Sir Xhanderghul is one of the kindest men they have worked for, as well as one of the bravest. Many of the men try to tell the PCs stories of past campaigns under Sir Xhanderghul's leadership.

If they are questioned about Mathew Servenson, the men know that he is a conjurer, but they do not know he is dead. If the PCs reveal his death to the men, they become depressed and sullen and will no longer speak with the PCs until they have had a chance to ask Sir Xhanderghul about the matter. None of the men has seen the dragon, Sathric, but they have encountered most of the other beings in the gap and will be able to describe them to the PCs if asked. If someone manages to dispel the *geas* on any of the soldiers, there will be no noticeable effect. Even without the *geas*, the soldiers know nothing about Loliadac; the *geas* is just a safeguard to make sure that they don't find out, given time. They are all loyal to Sir Xhanderghul and will not believe any stories the PCs tell them about their leader being possessed by an evil spirit unless they are given proof.

The heroes have about two hours to explore the outpost freely from the time Loliadac leaves to meet with Sathric. After this time is up, the DM should feel free to have Loliadac show up at the most inopportune moment, such as when the PCs are searching through his bedroom or the vault.

Loliadac's reaction to catching the PCs rummaging around in his belongings depends on the party's attitude. If the party seems sorry and embarrassed, Loliadac escorts them to their rooms and keeps an eye on them for the rest of the night. If the party is abusive and accusing, Loliadac remains calm and tries to convince the PCs that they couldn't be further from the truth. He tries to get them to leave for the *gate* as soon as possible.

When the PCs are finally ready to leave for the *gate*, Loliadac wishes them luck and sends them off with a group of

four soldiers to guide them.

B. Sathric's Lair. Sathric is a devious and cunning shadow dragon who came through the *gate* three days ago. Only 28 years old, Sathric crossed through the portal to the Prime Material plane out of curiosity and found the shadowy recesses of the mountainous terrain much to his liking. He has spent the last two days lying low, preying on mountain lions. During twilight hours, he leaves his new lair to scout the area. He discovered Twilight Mansion yesterday, but he has not harried the inhabitants there yet. He is cautious because his draconian senses tell him that there is more than meets the eye to one of them (Sir Xhanderghul, of course).

Sathric has chosen a small, isolated cave hidden behind a large boulder as his lair. PCs who demand to investigate this small side valley are free to do so, but unless they use magic at the right time or they actually clamber up the side of the mountain to look for a cave, they will not find the entrance. Even if they do search the mountains here, without magic or knowledge of the entrance it takes hours to find the cave opening. Assume that for each man-hour the PCs spend searching at the end of this valley, they have a cumulative 1% chance of finding the cave.

Sathric's cave is roughly circular. The entrance is about 15' wide and 15' high. The cave itself has a diameter of about 60'. Sathric spends all of his daytime hours lurking in the shadows at the back of the cave. He has no treasure; the main reason he went through the *gate* to begin with was to find some. During his secret meeting with Loliadac, Sathric demands to be paid handsomely for his services. Loliadac is happy to oblige and promises to give him half of the money he stole from the inn's vault as soon as Loliadac gets his body back.

If the PCs manage to find his lair during the day when he is home, Sathric will attack at once. He flees to the *gate* if brought below 30 hp (or into the wilderness if the *gate* has been destroyed).

Sathric, juvenile shadow dragon: INT genius; AL CE; AC −4; MV 18, fly 30 (D), jump 3; HD 12; hp 84; THAC0 5; #AT 3 plus special; Dmg 1d6+4/1d6+4/3d6+4 plus special; SA +4 to hit and damage with physical attacks; breath weapon (blindness for one round, loss of 3/4 or half experience levels for 2d4+2 turns); spells; SD immune to energy draining; hide in shadows 60%; *mirror image* (2-5 images) three times a day; MR 20%; SZ G; ML 16; XP 10,000; MC5. Sathric can cast two spells a day at the 10th level of ability. Currently he has memorized *magic missile* and *enlarge*.

C. The Gate. The party's escorts begin to look rather nervous as they approach the *gate*. The guards quickly point to the obelisk and tell the PCs that they need only touch the menhir to get to the Shadowlands. Anyone who touches the *gate* with bare flesh vanishes instantly, re-emerging in the Shadowlands. The guards wait until the PCs are gone, then return immediately to Twilight Mansion.

The *gate* itself juts out from the side of the mountain at the head of a recent landslide. Clambering up to the large metal obelisk takes about 10 minutes and requires a successful dexterity check. If the check fails, the PC slips and slides partway down the landslide, taking 1-6 hp damage. The PC must make another dexterity check to get to the *gate*.

The *gate* stands about 20' tall and resembles a large blunt cone. At its base, it has a diameter of about 10'. As the PCs draw near, they become aware of a slight tingling in the air. The *gate* is made of a strange dull-gray metal. The *gate* is 80% magic resistant and can be hit by only +2 or better weapons. Even then, it has an armor class of −5 and takes 150 hp damage before it is destroyed. Such destruction results in a massive explosion, equal to a 15d6 *fireball* and covering a radius of 50 yards. All that remains of the *gate* after this is a scorched mark on the ground. The receiving *gate* in the Shadowlands explodes at the same time.

Loliadac can sense any damage done to the *gate*. He immediately uses his *helm of teleportation* to get to the *gate* and stop it from being destroyed, taking only 1-4 rounds to do so. Sathric has a 75% chance of being nearby if the *gate* is attacked at night, and he will respond with force in 1-6 rounds. Sathric is terrified of being stranded on this plane. Each time the *gate* is damaged in his presence, he must make a morale check or flee through it.

Destroying the *gate* breaks Loliadac's connection to his fortress on the Shadowlands, forcing his mind back into its prison there and giving Sir Xhanderghul control of his body again. When the PCs first reach the *gate*, however, they probably won't have enough information to want to destroy it.

About the Shadowlands

Shadowland is a demi-plane, a large chunk of matter that floats in the Ethereal plane. Demi-planes are not true planes of existence, but rather are only half formed. Most of them break up or become part of an existing plane eventually, but a few of them continue to grow until they become planes themselves.

The demi-plane of Shadow is thought to be the largest of these demi-planes. Constructed of equal parts of the Positive and Negative material planes, it is a murky realm filled with shadowy monsters. It is similar to the Prime Material plane in many ways, but different in many more. The major differences are outlined below. For general rules on adventuring on other planes, consult the AD&D 1st Edition *Manual of the Planes*.

Survival in the Shadowlands: The Shadowlands are similar enough to the Prime Material plane that day-to-day survival poses no unusual problems to travelers from the Prime Material. Gravity, time, and other natural laws operate on the demi-plane of Shadow exactly as they do on the Prime Material plane.

The major difference between the two is the composition of matter. The demi-plane of Shadow is made entirely from shadowstuff, matter that acts normally as long as it remains in the Shadowlands. If taken from this plane, it dissolves into nothingness in only 1-6 turns.

The entire plane is gloomy and dim, like twilight on the Prime Material plane. Rules on vision are given on page 117 of the *PH*.

Encounters in the Shadowlands: During this adventure, the PCs will probably not spend much time in the wilderness of the Shadowlands, so no random encounter table for this plane is given. Enterprising DMs may wish to make one up, though. The Shadowlands are populated by two classes of creatures: shadowbeings and outsiders. Shadowbeings include creatures like

shadow dragons, shadows, slow shadows, shadelings, greelox, and others that have no Prime Material counterparts. There are also shadow doubles of beings that live on the Prime Material plane. These are similar to their Prime Material counterparts except for the following differences:

—Shadow doubles have dull coloring, usually gray, brown, and other muted tones. They may be otherwise normal, they may be semitransparent, or they may be insubstantial shadows.

—Because they are made of shadowstuff, the strength of shadow doubles depends on the lighting of their environment. In shadowy conditions, they gain a +1 bonus to armor class and one additional hit point per hit die. Similarly, if they are encountered in dark or bright conditions, they lose one point from armor class as well as one hit point per hit die.

—Due to the magical nature of shadowstuff, there is a 1-in-20 chance that shadow doubles of at least average intelligence will have the spell-casting powers of a 1st- to 10th-level wizard. Their spells invariably relate to the Shadowlands.

Movement in the Shadowlands: Adventurers may get around in the Shadowlands using the same methods as on the Prime Material plane. However, movement here is extremely fast, relative to the Prime Material plane. The seventh-level spell *shadow walk* takes advantage of this fact. For every foot traveled in the Shadowlands, approximately 10′ are covered on the Prime Material plane. The PCs will probably not become aware of this unless they return to the Prime Material plane by some method other than through the *gate* to Twilight Gap.

Combat in the Shadowlands: Aside from the restrictions on vision while in the Shadowlands, combat is largely the same here as on the Prime Material plane. The PCs do suffer a −2 penalty to surprise, due to their lack of experience with this murky environment.

Magic in the Shadowlands: Due to the nature of this demi-plane, some forms of magic work differently here than they do on the Prime Material plane. As in the *Manual of the Planes*, all spell modifications have been listed according to the spell's school, with special cases noted as they occur.

Abjuration: These spells function normally in the Shadowlands. Natives of the Shadowlands may not be affected by certain spells, but the adventurers, being natives of another plane, most certainly will be. Note also that there are no normal forms of animal or plant life native to this realm.

Alteration: These spells usually function normally, except that they do not produce brilliant colors, darkness, or light here in Shadowland; all such spells are muted and dull. *Light, sunray,* and similar spells create light equal to torchlight, and spells like *darkness* create an area as dark as the light of the full moon. Spells like *burning hands* work normally but give off no more light than a normal torch. *Color spray* functions, but all saving throws against it are at +4 because its colors are muted.

Conjuration/Summoning: Due to the isolated location of the Shadowlands, the caster cannot summon beings from the outer planes or the Astral plane here. *Summon shadow* is a very dangerous spell on the demi-plane of Shadow: The caster automatically receives double the normal number of shadows, but they are not under his control and attack him at once.

Divination: These spells work normally in Shadowland.

Enchantment/Charm: These spells work normally as well.

Evocation/Invocation: Items created by one of these spells on the demi-plane are made of shadowstuff and have all its properties. The *astral spell* does not function here. Also, spells that create light function as detailed under "Alteration."

Illusion/Phantasm: These spells are affected the most by the nature of the Shadowlands. Spells like *phantasmal force, audible glamer,* and *project image* function normally but incorporate shadowstuff into the illusion, making it harder to disbelieve. All saving throws vs. illusions in the Shadowlands are made at −1. Spells that create objects add shadowstuff to them, as detailed for Evocation/Invocation.

Perhaps most interesting is the fact that many of these spells draw upon shadows to begin with (all of the *shadow monsters* spells, *shadow magic,* and *shadow door*). If cast here, the results of these spells are real. *Shadow monsters* gain the powers, personality, and statistics of the appropriate creature and cannot be controlled by the caster unless another spell (such as *charm monster*) is used. The results of *shadow magic* are just as real as if the actual spell were cast, though the ordinary limit on spell levels still applies (third level for *shadow magic,* fifth for *demi-shadow magic*). *Shadow door* may be used as a *passwall* spell in addition to rendering the caster *invisible* as soon as he steps through the door. *Shadow walk* opens a gateway to the Prime Material plane at the appropriate location.

Necromancy: These spells function normally.

Combination schools: Spells that belong to more than one school are hampered by both of their schools.

Magical Items: Items are altered in the same way as the spell effect they produce. Magical armor and weapons are reduced by two pluses while on this plane, unless they were created in the Shadowlands.

Player Characters: The various character classes are affected while in the Shadowlands as follows.

Priests: If the priest worships a god native to the Astral or outer planes, he cannot regain any spells above second level while in the Shadowlands. The ability to turn undead is slightly restricted here as well, causing the priest to turn undead as if he were one level lower than his actual level.

Warriors: All warrior abilities function. High-level paladin and ranger spell abilities are restricted as are wizards and priests.

Rogues: All rogue abilities are unchanged except the ability to hide in shadows. In the Shadowlands, this ability functions at twice the normal chance. This is useful against only non-natives of the Shadowlands, though. The thief has normal chances of hiding from natives.

Wizards: Aside from the spell alterations listed above, these characters remain unchanged.

The Fortress

Read or paraphrase the following to the players as soon as their PCs have entered the Shadowlands.

> The passage through the *gate* is quick but rather disorienting. It takes you several seconds to shake off the dizziness brought on by the

trip, but this feeling quickly fades as you examine the alien landscape around you.

Shadowland certainly lives up to its name. It is not much brighter here than during the twilight hours on the Prime Material plane. A thick haze floats in the air, dulling all colors to a drab mixture of grays and browns. The ground beneath your feet looks like dark gray soil. Indeed, a few dull-colored plants and weeds wave gently in the air here and there, despite the lack of a breeze. The earth feels strange, however, as if it were made of something more like flesh than dirt.

Looking up and around, you can make out one or two twisted trees through the haze, and what looks like the edge of a forest to your left. Beyond this forest are darker shapes that may be a mountain range, or just more shadows. The ground ahead slopes upward toward another large, dark shape, apparently a stout tower of some sort. It must be the fortress Sir Xhanderghul told you about.

As you consider your options, a distant sound reaches your ears, similar to the howl of a wolf but alien enough to send a chill down your spine. As the howl fades away, you become aware of the silence. Above the loud sound of your breathing, there is no noise, not even the lonely call of a bird in the distance.

The tower the PCs sighted is indeed the fortress that contains the *staff of disjoining*. If they set off immediately, they will be able to reach the tower with no problems. If they hesitate for more than a turn, or if they wander off to explore somewhere else, the PCs are suddenly attacked by a group of 3-24 shadows (see "Encounters in Twilight Gap" sidebar for statistics) that fight to the death.

If the PCs continue to ignore the fortress, the DM has two choices. He could have another group of shadows attack each turn until the party is killed or they finally turn their attention to the tower. However, if the DM wishes, he may let the party explore Shadowland. If the DM decides to do this, he will have to detail what the PCs encounter, as a description of this region of the demi-plane is beyond the scope of this adventure.

The tower itself is in ruins, and the upper levels are gone, though the first two floors (about 40') are still in intact. The tower is made of gray stone that feels strangely smooth. The absence of mortar-filled cracks in the walls gives the impression that the tower was carved from one massive boulder or hill. The front doors to the tower stand slightly open, as if inviting the PCs in.

As the PCs explore this fortress, the DM should try to convey the alienness of this realm. Keep the PCs on their toes by rolling dice for no apparent reason, checking the rules periodically, mumbling to yourself, and so on. You should soon have the PCs totally paranoid, and rightfully so, in a realm where innocuous shadows can suddenly turn against you!

There is no natural illumination anywhere in the fortress. Chambers and passageways commonly have a ceiling height of about 10', with exceptions noted in the text. The upper levels of this fortress are crumbling into disrepair, but the lower level is still fairly intact.

As the PCs explore the fortress, there is a 1-in-10 chance per turn that a wandering monster happens by. If this occurs, roll 1d6 and consult the table below to see what is encountered. There is a limited number of monsters in this area (except for shadows). If a roll indicates a monster the party has already slain, treat it as no encounter.

Fortress Encounters

1-3: **Shadows** (2-20): See "Encounters in Twilight Gap" sidebar for statistics. There is an unlimited number of shadows in this fortress, and all will fight to the death if encountered.

4: **Slow shadows** (10): See "Encounters in Twilight Gap" sidebar for statistics. These slow shadows attack on sight.

5: **Shadeling:** See "Encounters in Twilight Gap" and the full description on page 25 for complete statistics. This shadeling has not yet taken a form. It sees the PCs as an easy way to rectify this.

6: **Shadow above:** INT non; AL N; AC 5; MV 1, fly 9 (B); HD 10+10; hp 72; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA smothering; SZ H; ML 11; XP 1,400; MC2 (Lurker above). This shadow above has not eaten in some time, and it is very hungry. It drifts down on the party in complete silence.

Aside from various other life forms, a powerful being known as a greelox lives in the lower level of this fortress. This greelox, named Ruthra, moved into the fortress just a few weeks before Loliadac was freed. Indeed, the greelox played a large part in freeing Loliadac.

Ruthra discovered Loliadac's prison but was unable to open it. When the lost guard showed up at the fortress, Ruthra guided him to the prison chamber by whispering directions from the shadows, hoping that the guard would illuminate the powers of the strange staff. When Loliadac possessed the guard, Ruthra agreed to help Loliadac free his body by guiding anyone else who enters this fortress to the prison in return for various beautiful items of value.

When the PCs arrive at the fortress, Ruthra helps them along by whispering directions from the shadows and pointing out secret doors that hide the prison if the

party misses them. Ruthra does not know about the secret door to area D16. If the PCs ask the identity of this voice, Ruthra answers, "An old friend of Sir Xhanderghul." If discovered, Ruthra will try to flee, attacking only if cornered.

Ruthra, greelox: INT high; AL NE; AC −1; MV 15, web 21, jump 3; HD 6+12; hp 51; THAC0 13 (10 with sword); #AT 3 and 1; Dmg 1d8+3/2d6/2d6 and 2d4; SA poison, webs, *shadow magic;* SD +2 or better weapon to hit, immune to acid and poison, shadow jumping, hide in shadows 90%; SZ L; ML 16; XP 9,000; New monster (see page 25).

Ruthra is armed with a *shield +2* and a *long sword +3,* both of which were forged in the Shadowlands. On the Prime Material plane, the shield becomes nonmagical and the sword becomes a *long sword +1.* Ruthra also has a bracelet worth 1,200 gp and two gold rings worth 500 gp each. He wears a *ring of shocking grasp* that he uses to add 1d8+6 hp electrical damage to his sword attack during the first three rounds of combat.

In the Fortress

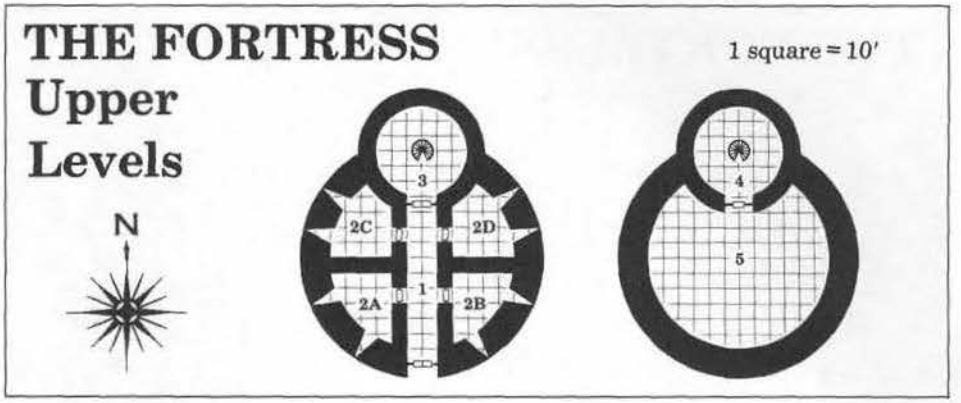
Upper Level

1. Main Hall. This hallway is barren and unremarkable, though several sets of footprints have disturbed the dust. Tracks between the entrance and area D3 were left by Loliadac and the guard who unwittingly freed his mind.

2. Side Rooms. These empty rooms served as barracks for soldiers ages ago when the tower was occupied, even before the lich took control. They have not been disturbed since then and are empty of furnishings. Area 2B, however, is the lair of 24 giant shadowrats. The shadowrats lurk about the corners of the chamber and titter menacingly at intruding parties, but they do not attack unless they are attacked first.

Giant shadowrats: INT semi; AL N(E); AC 6; MV 12, swim 6; HD 1d4+1 hp; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SA disease; SZ T; ML 7; XP 15 each; MC1 (Rat, modified).

3. Stairwell. This room is empty except for a spiral staircase that heads both up and down. All of the footprints lead downstairs. Anyone who starts to climb the stairs will hear the whispers of the soul beckoner in area D5 drifting down. The victim must make a saving throw vs. spells or be drawn to area D5 and attacked by the soul beckoner.



4. Stairwell, Upper Level. The only direction that the PCs can go from here is down; the way up is clogged with rubble. Even if the PCs clear the rubble, the stairs stop abruptly 15' above, as all of the levels above the second floor have been destroyed.

5. Second Floor. The floor of this large room is strewn with rubble. The ceiling and upper levels were destroyed long ago, and the whole floor is open to the air. There used to be separate rooms on this level, but the dividing walls have long since crumbled, leaving just the exterior walls. This chamber has become the lair of a single soul beckoner. It has lurked up here for centuries without food, and it is very hungry. The beckoner immediately attacks any PCs who enter, attempting to drain their life energy as quickly as possible. It has no treasure.

Soul beckoner: INT high; AL NE; AC 2; MV 6; HD variable (initially 4); hp variable (initially 31); THAC0 variable (initially 17); #AT 2; Dmg 1-6/1-6; SA energy drain, eerie whisper; SD 90% undetectable unless seen in bright light, +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 16; XP variable; MC5 (Wraith).

Lower Level

6. Stairwell. This level has escaped the brunt of the effects of the passage of time. There is significantly less dust on this level than on the one above, so following the footprints here requires a tracking proficiency check. If the footprints are detected, they lead the PCs directly to area D22, passing through areas D17-D21 to get there.

7. Guardroom. This large room was used as a guardroom ages ago, but it is now quite empty.

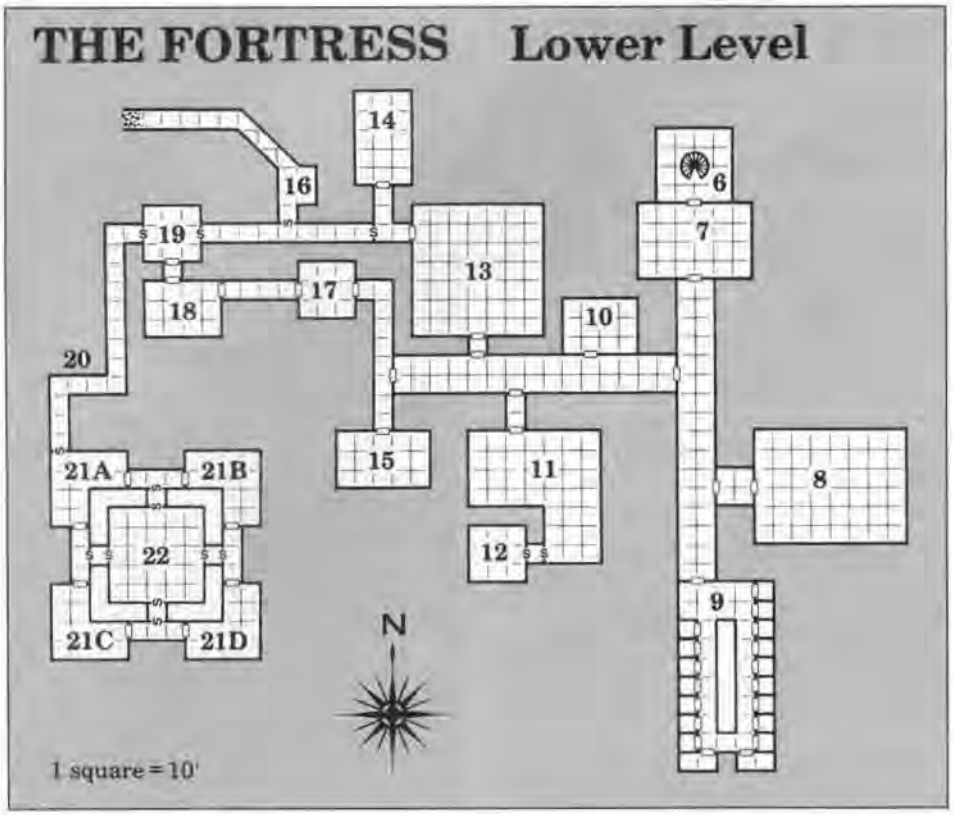
8. Kennel. Ages ago, this room housed a pack of shadow mastiffs. There is nothing here now.

9. Cell Block. Like the rest of this fortress, this area has not been used for ages. After Loliadac's clan managed to wrest control of the fortress from the lich, the rakshasas used these rooms as barracks. Many of the cells still contain ancient meditation mats, discarded spell components, and other such rubbish. Searching these rooms completely takes several hours, though nothing of use will be found.

10. Storeroom. This small room is filled with leftover food and other necessities from ages ago, all of which have long since rotted to uselessness.

11. Library. This room has remained unchanged since Loliadac's imprisonment. Hundreds of books fill shelves throughout the room, both against the walls and in free-standing cases. The books' subject matter varies widely, but most discuss magic, the inner planes, and similar matters. Many books on the Shadowlands are present as well. In all, these books would bring a hefty price from collectors and sages, if they could be transported safely home. However, most of them will crumble to dust if they are treated roughly. There are no magical books present in this library, as both the lich and Loliadac stored all such books in area D12.

12. Secret Library. Each volume in this smaller library is kept in a cabinet



to protect it from damage. Loliadac keeps his spell books and a few magical scrolls and books here. Each book and scroll has a separate cabinet (except for the spell books, which all share one large cabinet to the north). Each cabinet is protected by a *glyph of warding* that will do 9d4 hp electrical damage to anyone who opens the cabinet. In addition, each book and scroll is protected by a *fire trap* that does 1d4 +13 hp damage to any PC within 5' failing a saving throw vs. spells. Loliadac placed all of these protective spells himself in the days after his release, in order to make sure that no one disturbed any of his treasures.

The magical books and scrolls include the following: a scroll of *protection from fire,* a scroll of *protection from poison,* a *manual of stone golems,* and a *vacuous grimoire.* The spell books contain all of the mage spells that Loliadac currently has memorized as well as the following spells: *read magic, wizard lock, detect good, rope trick, explosive runes, dispel magic, shadow monsters, shadow door, summon shadow, true seeing, permanent illusion, geas.*

13. Laboratory. Loliadac had no real use for this alchemical lab, and he entered this room only rarely in his stay in the fortress. The lab is filled with equipment useful in magical research, but almost all of it has broken or rotted away. There are several dozen vials of potion on tables and shelves, but most of them have decayed into bitter-tasting but harmless liquids. Two of the potions have become potions of *poison* and one has become a potion of *delusionary flying.* One of the potions remains unharmed: a small, unlabeled vial that contains one dose of *oil of timelessness.*

14. Summoning Chamber. The lich used this room as a summoning room because it is connected, however tenuously, to the Astral plane. Thus, all spells that require contact with the Astral or outer planes will work in this chamber. Similarly, clerics will be able to regain spells above second level. Loliadac never had much use for this room until lately. After he possessed Sir Xhanderghul, he used this chamber to store the body of Mathew Servenson (Loliadac plans to use a *speak with dead* spell to learn the functions of Mathew's items, when he has time) in addition to all of the loot he stole from Twilight Mansion.

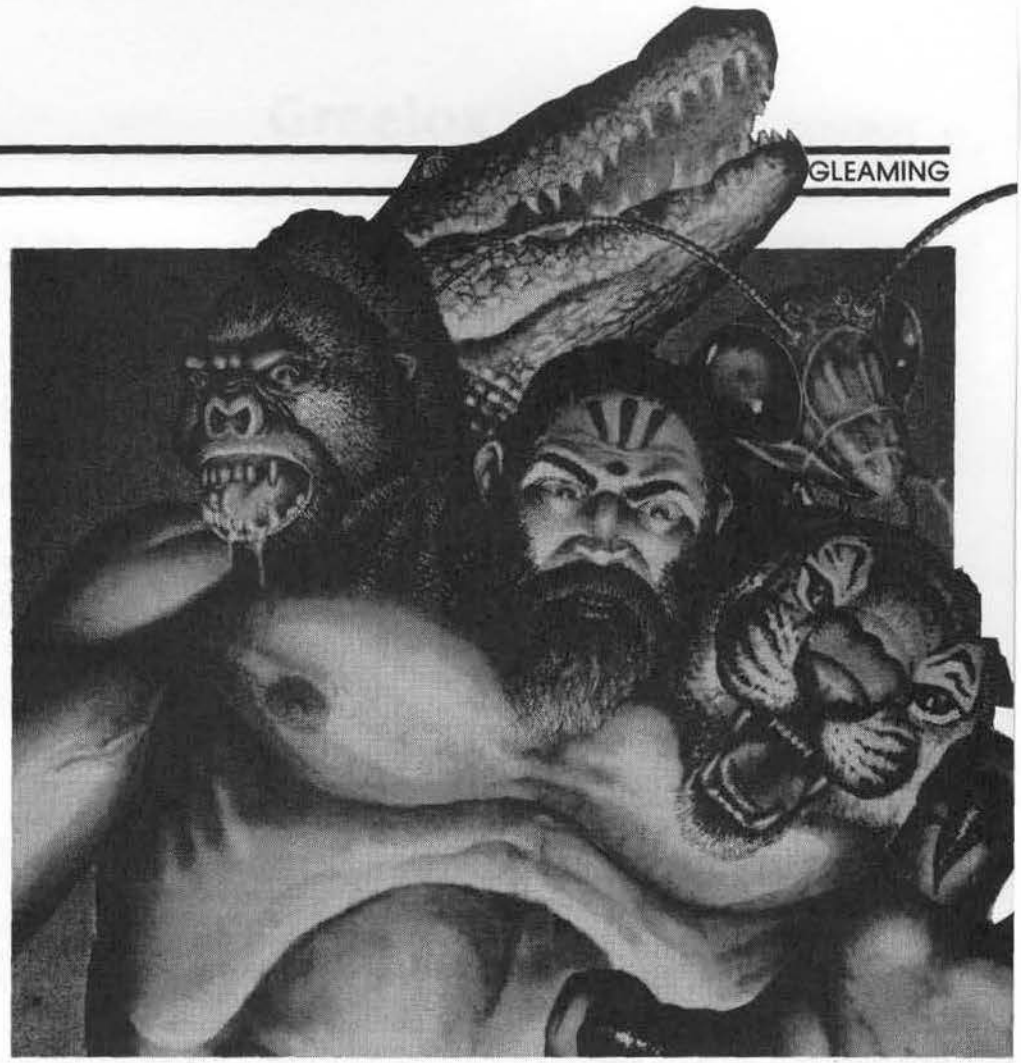
To prevent unwanted intrusion, Loliadac has *wizard locked* the door to this room, the secret door to the south, and the door into the laboratory. To further throw off pursuit, he has placed a *permanent illusion* in the northern section of this hallway, making it appear that the passage has been blocked off by a centuries-old cave-in.

If the PCs gain access to this chamber, they will discover that it contains only the items listed above. Mathew's body has been tossed carelessly into the northeast corner of the room. His magical items and the treasure from Twilight Mansion's vault have all been stacked against the north wall. This treasure is kept in four large chests, all of them locked but not trapped.

The first three chests contain 11,873 cp, 15,147 sp, and 7,678 gp. The last chest contains 1,214 pp and a sack brimming with 23 gems of 100-gp base value. Mathew's magical items include a potion of *extra healing,* a potion of *vitality,* a *ring of protection +3,* a *wand of illumination* with 17 charges left, a *wand of conjuration* with 24 charges left, a necklace containing four *beads of force,* and a *quarterstaff +2.* Mathew's spell books are present as well. The DM should pick spells for these spell books, keeping in mind that Mathew was a 10th-level conjurer.

If the body is investigated, the PCs find that Mathew died of deep wounds to the neck, perhaps administered by a dagger or similar short-bladed weapon. The wizard has been dead for about three weeks. If the PCs think to use a *speak with dead* spell to talk to Mathew, the DM will have to answer their questions as literally and briefly as possible, as per the spell description. Spells such as *raise dead, resurrection,* and *wish* allow for more exact questioning, although it is doubtful that the PCs have the resources to cast them (remember that it takes a 21st-level cleric to cast *raise dead* on a body dead for three weeks).

If the PCs use magic to question the corpse, Mathew knows only that one night, three weeks ago, he awoke to see a huge man looming over his bed. Before he had a chance to do anything, the figure had cut his throat with a dagger and left the room. Mathew knows nothing about the situation in Twilight Gap,



but if he is told about recent events, he begs the PCs to set things right. He even tells them about his magical items, their command words, and how many uses each one has left.

If asked about Sir Xhanderghul's story that Mathew went insane after casting a spell, the wizard becomes very confused and does not know what to say. He admits, if asked, that the figure that killed him was about the size and shape of Sir Xhanderghul. He has no explanation as to why Sir Xhanderghul has been acting strangely.

If he is *resurrected* or *raised*, Mathew's characteristics are as follows.

Mathew Servenson, human conjurer: AL NG; AC 10; MV 12; W10; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 8, D 16, C 17, I 17, W 13, Ch 10.

15. Storeroom. The lich used this room for storage, but the rakshasas hardly ever entered it. Recently, a large shadow roper has moved in here, and it will attack the PCs on sight. Due to the magical nature of Shadowland, this shadow roper has natural spell abilities equivalent to a 7th-level mage. It may use each spell once a day, and it automatically regains each spell after a day of rest. The shadow roper has no treasure.

Shadow roper: INT exceptional; AL CE; AC −1; MV 3; HD 12+12; hp 98; THAC0 7; #AT 1+1; Dmg 5-20 plus special; SA strength drain, spells; SD immune to lightning, half damage from cold, save at −4 vs. fire; MR 80%; SZ L; ML 15; XP 9,000; MC2 (Roper, modified).

This shadow roper has the following spells: *charm person, magic missile, shocking grasp, chill touch, scare, stinking cloud, web, blink, lightning bolt, shadow monsters.*

16. Secret Room. Despite the fact that he lived here for hundreds of years, Loliadac never discovered this room. It was intended to be used as a secret escape route by the original builders of this fortress, but the tunnel collapsed due to lack of maintenance.

When the first party of adventures pursued Loliadac into the Shadowlands centuries ago, four of their number had already perished. Of the remaining three, just two lived to see the final battle with Loliadac. The third, a powerful fighter named Nigel Smithore, was forced to flee a battle in the main hall of this very tower. He was getting the better of two rakshasas when one of the monsters cast a *fear* spell from a scroll. He fled to this chamber, where he was attacked and killed by a hungry shadow above. The shadow above has since moved on, but Nigel's spirit remains here in the form of a haunt.

As the party enters this room, Nigel's haunt materializes and approaches the nearest PC, attempting to possess him. What happens next depends on the party's reaction. If a battle erupts, Nigel will focus his attacks on one target, trying to possess the target as soon as possible.

Nigel does retain memories of his former life and stops his attack if made aware of the party's purpose here. Nigel knows all about the history of Twilight Gap, but he is not sure if his friends were successful in imprisoning Loliadac. If he is told that Loliadac is free (even partially free), he will do his best to see that the rakshasa lord is reimprisoned.

Nigel knows that Loliadac's mind has been freed the instant he sees the *staff of disjoining* in area D22. He tells the PCs that the only way to re-imprison Loliadac's mind is to close the *gate* to the Shadowlands. He knows that this may be done eventually by battering it to pieces, or it may be done through magic, although the *gate* resists most spells cast at it. Burying the *gate* again won't suffice; it must be destroyed.

Nigel Smithore, haunt: INT high; AL NG; AC 0; MV 6; HD 5; hp 39; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA possession, dexterity drain; SD hit only by silver or magical weapons and fire; SZ M; ML 16; MC2.

17. Guardroom. This room housed the lich's personal guardian, a small shadow dragon. The dragon was slain by Loliadac and his clan ages ago, and this room has remained empty ever since.

18. Meeting Room. The lich conducted meetings with its guests in this room. The chamber is currently empty.

19. Bedroom. Both the lich and Loliadac used this room as a bedroom. The area is currently in a shambles, with rubble strewn about haphazardly.

20. Hallway. This hallway slopes

downward at a slight angle toward area 21.

21. Outer Chambers. These four rooms contained elaborate magical traps involving *teleportation* and similar direction-confusing effects when the lich kept its treasure in area 22. These traps have long since expired, and all that remains are four empty rooms.

The greelox Ruthra uses area 21D as his lair. The southeastern corner of this room is a mess of webbing that Ruthra uses as a bed. Anyone touching the webbing is affected as detailed in the greelox description. There is no treasure here, as Ruthra always carries his valuables with him.

22. Vault. Loliadac was imprisoned here ages ago by the *staff of disjoining.* This floor is totally empty and free of dust. The ceiling is an arched dome, 30' above the floor at its highest point. The *staff of disjoining* floats vertically in the center of the room about 4' off the ground. The staff shimmers with a dull-gray light (normally, its light would be a brilliant blue, but the nature of the Shadowlands changes it to gray). The light travels upward to the north in a wavering beam to envelop a large figure, the details of which cannot be made out through its aura of gray light. A *know alignment* spell cast on the staff yields ambiguous results, since it is so closely connected to an evil creature.

The large figure is Loliadac's physical body. Normally, his mind would be imprisoned in a similar aura of light to the south of the body, but the guard who wandered in here partially deactivated the magical imprisonment by bumping the staff. If the PCs grab the staff, the gray aura instantly disappears, the staff crumbles to dust, and Loliadac's material body falls to the floor.

Back on the Prime Material plane, Loliadac instantly senses what has happened. He *teleports* to the *gate*, steps through it, and then *teleports* to this chamber. When he materializes, he thank the PCs and promptly leaves Sir Xhanderghul's body to reclaim his own.

If the PCs seem hesitant to touch the staff, the greelox Ruthra urges them to take it, whispering from the shadows. If they still hesitate, Ruthra attacks, trying to push the PCs into the staff. The greelox does not fight to the death and flees if brought below 20 hp.

Loliadac, rakshasa maharajah: INT exceptional; AL CE; AC −5; MV 18; HD 13+39; hp 129; THAC0 7; #AT 3; Dmg 1-6/1-6/2-10; SA illusion, spells, *ESP;* SD spell immunity, +2 or better weapon to hit; SZ L; ML 18; XP 10,000; MC1. (See area A for spells).

Loliadac has a particularly vile-looking physical body. He stands a full 8' tall and has the hands of a great ape, tipped with formidable talons. Like many other rakshasas, his palms curve backward. Loliadac has five heads: ape, crocodile, tiger, mantis, and (in the center) human. Despite his five mouths, only one may bite per round.

Concluding the Adventure

If the PCs unravel the mystery and discover Loliadac's presence, they will probably return to the Prime Material plane, either to attack Loliadac as Sir Xhanderghul or to destroy the *gate.*

Attacking Loliadac while he is still in Sir Xhanderghul's body is pointless; Loliadac will fight to the death. Just before he dies, he leaves Sir Xhanderghul's body and attempts to possess someone else, either a PC or nearby guard or servant. Loliadac may make one possession attempt per round and cannot be harmed while bodiless. Treat this as if he were under the effects of a *magic jar* spell, except that he does not require a gem to house his soul.

Once Loliadac manages to possess someone, he tries to sneak off to find someone else to free his body. Sir Xhanderghul, in any case, will be dead, and the PCs will probably have a tough time explaining their actions.

A far better plan would be to destroy the *gate,* which forces Loliadac's mind back to the demi-plane, frees Sir Xhanderghul, and stops the invasion of shadow creatures.

In addition to the rewards the party gets from the merchants' guild, Sir Xhanderghul agrees to let the party keep any treasure found during their adventure, including any magical items and up to 1,000 gp per PC from Twilight Mansion's treasury. If Mathew's body is returned as well, Sir Xhanderghul will be so thankful that he will offer them anything he has as a reward. He tries to honor any requests the PCs make, unless they are totally out of line.

A less desirable outcome is the release of Loliadac's body. If this occurs, Loliadac will try to kill the PCs at once (after thanking them politely for their help). Ruthra the greelox will join this battle as well. If Loliadac is killed, he is banished to his home plane. The rulers of this plane will have forgotten about his chaotic tendencies, and he will be able to return to the Prime Material plane in 100 years for revenge. If Loliadac is not killed, he will begin to make a nuisance of himself in the Twilight Gap area, preying on anyone who enters and leading a new clan of rakshasas on raids from Twilight Mansion.

A third possibility is that the PCs may die before they manage to either free Loliadac or destroy the *gate.* If this occurs, Loliadac will find another party to free his body for him.

There are several possible leads for further adventures. If Loliadac escapes, the PCs might be charged to hunt him down. The PCs might also be intrigued by the Shadowlands and decide to explore them more thoroughly. The only limitations are the imaginations of the players and the DM. Ω

Shadeling

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any shadowy area
FREQUENCY:	Very rare (uncommon in Shadowland)
ORGANIZATION:	Pack
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Twilight/early morning (any in Shadowland)
DIET:	Living shadows
INTELLIGENCE:	Average (8-10)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral evil
NO. APPEARING:	1-10
ARMOR CLASS:	0/as duplicated form
MOVEMENT:	18/as duplicated form
HIT DICE:	Special/as duplicated form
THAC0:	Nil/as duplicated form
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1/as duplicated form
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	Special/as duplicated form
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	See below
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	See below
SIZE:	Special
MORALE:	Fearless (19-20)
XP VALUE:	1,400/variable

Shadelings are bizarre and dangerous denizens of the demiplane of Shadow. In their natural form, they are flowing, sentient shadows about the size of a man's shadow but irregular in shape.

Combat: Shadelings possess the power of duplication. The shadeling engulfs its victim's shadow if the unfortunate fails a save vs. breath weapon. Once this is done, the shadeling takes the victim's material form. The victim's weaponry and armor are duplicated as well, although duplicated magical items are not magical. The shadeling gains all the physical abilities of its victim, including hit points, armor class, and special physical attacks and defenses. Once a shadeling has taken a material form, it attempts to slay the being it has duplicated. If it manages to do so, it remains in its new form for 2-20 days. Then it returns to its true form and must find another victim. In their true forms, shadelings cannot be physically harmed and are unaffected by most spells. *Light* and *darkness* spells have a 5% chance per level of the caster of destroying the shadeling, and the continual versions of these spells have a 10% chance per level of the caster. *Dispel evil* and *protection from evil* spells affect shadelings normally, and a *shadow walk* spell cast on them destroys them automatically, as does the *sunray* spell. A *holy word* uttered at a shadeling in physical form causes it to revert to its true form, while a *holy word* uttered at a shadeling in shadow form banishes it to the Shadowlands. If killed while in the form of some other being, the shadeling returns to its shadow form, but it loses the power to duplicate for a full day.

Habitat/Society: Shadelings seem to have only one purpose; to duplicate living beings and feed on their shadows.

Ecology: Any mirror (that has been prepared by casting *enchant an item* and *permanency* spells on it) that is subsequently engulfed by a shadeling will instantly become a *mirror of opposition.* Although they may resemble undead, shadelings cannot be turned by priests.

Greelox

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any underground/ruins
FREQUENCY:	Very rare (rare in Shadowland)
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Night (any in Shadowland)
DIET:	Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	High (13-14)
TREASURE:	A
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral evil
NO. APPEARING:	1
ARMOR CLASS:	1
MOVEMENT:	15, web 21, jump 3
HIT DICE:	6+12
THAC0:	13
NO. OF ATTACKS:	4 and 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-3/1-3/2-12/2-12 and 2-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Poison, webs, shadow magic
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	See below
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Standard
SIZE:	L (14' diameter)
MORALE:	Champion (15-16)
XP VALUE:	8,000

Greelox are powerful, spiderlike natives of the Shadowlands. In addition to eight spiny legs, greelox have two limbs that function as arms. Their two front legs end in scythelike blades. Greelox are gray and brown, with dull red eyes and black claws and mandibles.

Combat: Greelox attack up to four times a round. They may wield weapons and shields in their hands. In addition to these attacks, a greelox may also bite for 2-8 hp damage. This bite is poisonous (save vs. poison or die in 1-4 rounds). If the save is made, the victim becomes nauseated for 3d4 rounds (−2 penalty to his to-hit rolls and a +1 penalty to armor class). A victim whose bare flesh comes in contact with a greelox web suffers 1 hp damage each round from the web acid (affects only organic material). A greelox may choose to forgo all its attacks for one round and spin webbing equivalent to a *web* spell at any target within 30 yards. This may be done once per turn.

In any one round, a greelox may forgo any attacks and manipulate the surrounding shadows to achieve a variety of effects equivalent to a *shadow magic* spell. A greelox may also *dimension door* through shadows at will. The greelox must have shadows present to do this, and may travel up to 210 yards in this manner. A greelox may hide in shadows as a thief, with a 90% chance of success. A +2 or better weapon is required to hit greelox, and they are immune to all forms of poison and acid.

Habitat/Society: Greelox are solitary creatures on the Prime Material plane. However, there are rumors of greelox cities in the Shadowlands: massive mazes of webs that take up acres of terrain. In addition to their own language, greelox may speak any other language they hear spoken for one hour or more.

Ecology: Greelox young are born live and abandoned soon thereafter. They grow rapidly, reaching full size in one year. Greelox live an average of 50 years. Dried greelox webbing is useful to alchemists in the preparation of *oil of acid resistance.*

THE YEAR OF PRIEST'S DEFIANCE

BY ALLEN VARNEY WITH RICK SWAN

A DARK SUN™ Adventure

Artwork by Tom Baxa

Last year's publication of module HWA3, Nightstorm, *marked the completion of Allen Varney's "Blood Brethren" trilogy of adventures for the D&D® HOLLOW WORLD™ campaign set. For TSR's new DARK SUN™ campaign world, he will design the Veiled Alliance sourcebook, to be published in fall 1992. This is his third appearance in DUNGEON® Magazine.*

Rick Swan's "At the Spottle Parlor" appeared in DUNGEON issue #12. His projects for TSR, Inc. include supplements for DRAGONLANCE®, SPELLJAMMER™, and MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ games. His latest work for TSR is FR14 The Great Glacier, *a FORGOTTEN REALMS™ sourcebook to be published this summer.*

"The Year of Priest's Defiance" is an AD&D® adventure set in the world of Athas, the campaign setting described in the DARK SUN boxed set. The adventure works best for three to six PCs of levels 3-5 (beginning characters in the DARK SUN world). In addition to the AD&D 2nd Edition rules and the DARK SUN set, you'll need *The Complete Psionics Handbook.* In statistic listings for NPCs and monsters, power scores for psionic abilities appear in parentheses.

This adventure can be incorporated into any existing Athasian campaign. It can be used as an immediate sequel to the adventure in the boxed set, an introductory adventure for characters just created on a player's "character tree," or a drop-in encounter in the midst of a longer desert adventure. An enterprising DM can also adapt the adventure to other campaign settings.

The story line is self-contained and can stand alone, but it also features many opportunities to send the PCs in new directions. These "loose ends" are reviewed at the end of the text, with suggestions for development. Use the ones you like and ignore or play down the rest.

For the Dungeon Master

The most widely used Athasian calendar follows a pair of concurrent cycles of 11 and seven 375-day years. Every 77 years completes a "king's age" cycle. There have been 189 complete king's cycles—more than 14,500 years—since this calendar began. The 11-year *endlean* cycle names its years Friend, Desert, Priest, and so forth; the seven-

year *seofean* cycle names its years Fury, Contemplation, Vengeance, etc.; and the years of the king's age receive combined names like Friend's Fury, Desert's Contemplation, and so on.

The standard DARK SUN campaign begins in the 190th king's age, on High Sun, the first day of the Year of Priest's Defiance. This adventure is set on that day and takes its name from that year.

The adventurers, crossing the desert, encounter a sandstorm that uncovers part of an ancient ruin of unknown type. Green grass—an unusual and astonishing sight in the DARK SUN world—magically sprouts around the ancient structure. The ruin is likely to be an irresistible lure to the PCs. Should they explore it, they may discover what appears to be a source of pure water. Unknown to the PCs, the building is actually an ancient mortuary, and the water is a bound water elemental that has been driven mad by long confinement.

Two other parties appear while the PCs are exploring the ruin: a former templar named Thrassos Haruk, who has been searching for the legendary structure; and a raiding party led by Banneker, a ruthless defiler wizard.

The PCs must escape or otherwise deal with the raiding party, either with Thrassos Haruk's help or without it. The PCs (or Thrassos, or the raiding party) may release the trapped elemental, flooding the area to create a temporary oasis that will attract monsters from all over the Tablelands.

How the PCs Get There

This scenario takes place in a sandy waste in the Tablelands outside Tyr, a city of the standard DARK SUN campaign. You can adapt it easily to any other sandy waste; there are many of them on Athas.

Why are the PCs wandering in the hostile Tablelands? If they played the introductory adventure in the DARK SUN boxed set, they finish that scenario here. If not, here are some other ways to explain the heroes' involvement in the adventure:

—They are caravan guards who became separated from their caravan in a sudden sandstorm.

—They are slaves who escaped from a grain plantation or iron mine outside Tyr.

—They were traveling between cities when raiders attacked (perhaps they were attacked by Banneker's raiders, who appear later in this adventure). The PCs barely fended them off, and are now weakened.

—They are treasure hunters searching for metal or magic in forgotten ruins.

Mansion in the Sand

A new day is about to begin. The PCs are thirsty, they're probably lost, and they've just endured a grueling sandstorm. They've lost most of a night's travel, and they're facing another day of oppressing desert heat. Allow the severity of the situation to sink in, then read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> You're standing along the ridge of a towering dune when the dawn breaks like a sneak attack. The sun rises quickly, bright red at the horizon, and you already feel hotter.
>
> When you look down the sunlit side of the dune, you can hardly believe your eyes. The sandstorm has half-exposed a building. It's made of large tan-colored stones, with a flat roof surrounded by a series of thick pillars. It looks like one wing of a larger structure. Though the building has been buried in the sand for who knows how many king's ages, it looks like it could have been built yesterday.
>
> The far end of the building is facing away from you, toward the sun. There's a patch of green in the sand around it. As you watch, the green spreads. To your amazement, you realize that the patch is grass—fresh, new grass.

Stress to the PCs how wondrous a sight green grass is on Athas. If they're not inclined to investigate the ruin, any PC who makes a successful Intelligence check realizes that where there's grass, there may be water as well. Travelers can never have enough water in the desert; to ignore a potential source of water would be foolish, possibly suicidal.

Ruin Exterior

The grass around the ruin sprouts densely in a 100′ radius and grows to about a foot in height before it stops. The sprouting grass results from a special *rejuvenate* spell (W5, P4; see the DARK SUN boxed set for details), activated when the sun's rays struck the walls of the exposed building. The grass is a type of couch grass, lush green and sweet smelling, similar to wheat. It's not poisonous nor dangerous in any other way, though it's somewhat bitter to the taste.

The building is one wing of a structure built in Greco-Roman style, with high ceilings and majestic decorations, though the ravages of time have eroded most of the detail. The building has tilted slightly over the centuries (about a 10° slope), but it remains intact.

Though the PCs may never figure it out, this building was once a commercial mortuary. The permanent *rejuvenate* spell that made the grass grow served to produce consoling beauty for wealthy clients.

Ruin Interior

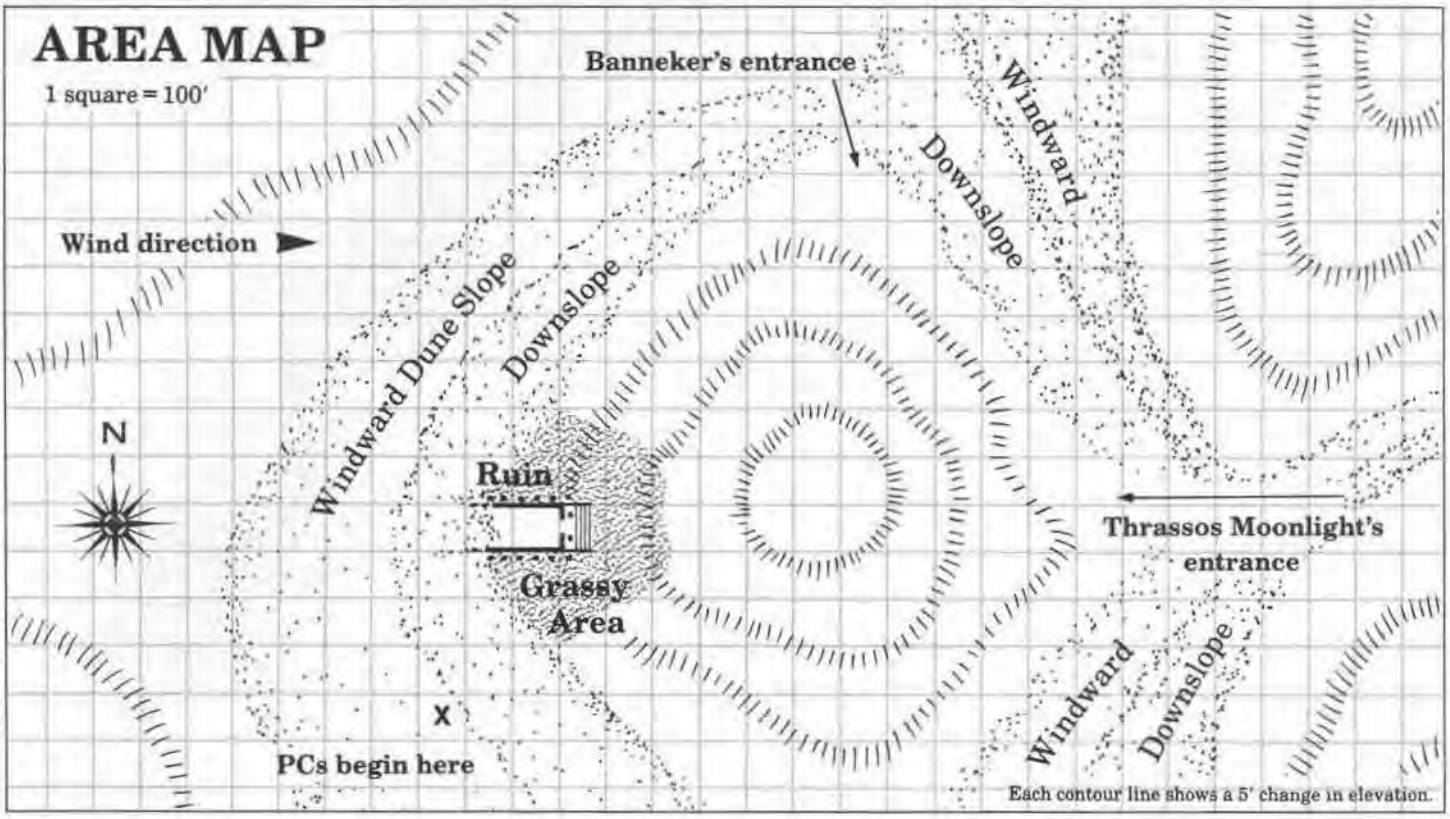
The air inside the ruin is musty and humid. There is no interior light source, but the rising sun shines straight down the hallway, illuminating the rooms with dim red light.

Sand drifts fill the interior to a depth of 2′-3′; walking in the loose sand reduces normal movement rates by a third. Ceilings are 9′-10′ high, measured from the surface of the drifts. Except for the sand, most rooms are empty, their original contents long since crumbled to dust.

1. North Mural Room. This room has wide, high windows without panes and is full of sand drifts to almost waist level. There is nothing beneath the sand except for two rows of eight heavy stone benches (300 lbs. each). The walls are stained and dirty, but still faintly visible are colorful murals showing happy people in clean cities full of greenery. Funeral services were held in this room.

2. South Mural Room. This room is similar to area 1, but here the murals depict pools of blue water surrounded by lush vegetation. What appear to be long, open, wooden boxes float on the surfaces of the pools. Happy people stand in the boxes, some of them wielding poles with strings that dangle into the water.

This room was also used for funeral services. The murals depict boats and fishermen, sights unknown in the current age.



3. North Latrine. There is nothing in this room but sand. Near the north wall are three shallow indentations, each about a foot in diameter, that lead to deep holes. A PC who examines the indentations and makes a successful intelligence check deduces the probable purpose of this room.

4. South Latrine. This room is identical to area 3, but the indentations are located near the south wall. Additionally, a tapering sand pit 10' in diameter fills the northern section of the room, blocking the entry way.

The pit belongs to a young ant lion. The stone floor here eroded long ago, allowing the ant lion to burrow upward and construct the pit.

Ant lion, young: INT animal; AL N; AC 2; MV 9, burrow 1; HD 4; hp 30; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 5-20; SA victim is impaled on creature's barbs for automatic 5d4 hp damage each round after initial hit; SZ L; ML 8; XP 270; Psionics: nil; MC2.

A PC coming within a foot of the pit has a 20% chance of slipping and falling in; a PC intentionally entering the pit has a 50% chance of sliding to the bottom. A PC taking precautions when entering the pit, such as having a companion hold him with a rope, has no risk of falling. Anyone who falls to the bottom of the pit, a distance of 20', lands in a bed of soft sand and suffers 2-8 hp damage.

As soon as a PC reaches the bottom of the pit, regardless of whether he falls or enters intentionally, the young ant lion bursts from a covering of sand and attempts to grab the PC with its mandibles. The ant lion fights to the death, though it won't leave its pit.

If the PCs defeat the ant lion, they may explore the pit. A passage leading from the south side of the pit winds underground for about 200'. Several shorter passages branch off this main passage and lead to similar pits; the longest branch leads to an escape hole. All of the pits, as well as the escape hole, open to the surface of the desert. In one of the pits (DM's choice) is a chunk of black onyx (worth 20 sp), left behind by one of the ant lion's long-dead victims. You may want to stock the passages and pits with more treasure, along with snakes, scorpions, and other hazards.

5. Storage. This room is filled with piles of sawdust mixed with what seem to be blue, green, and red powders. The powders are odorless, harmless, and worthless.

The sawdust piles were once wooden crates that held incense and other ceremonial substances used for funerals. Though the substances are now inert, resourceful PCs might use the dust to surprise and blind an enemy.

6. Long Room. Around the edge of the room stand many stone shelves holding dozens of urns decorated with embossed designs. About a third of the urns show elaborately detailed pictures of pastoral scenes and teeming cities similar to those in the mural rooms. The rest are plain stone. The urns are all the same size and look large enough to hold a gallon or two of water, but all are empty.

These shelves hold a wide selection of funerary urns that were to contain cremated remains. The detailed urns were intended for wealthy customers, the plain urns for the less affluent.

7. Rubble. A thick wall of rubble blocks access to the rest of the building. Originally, the western wings of the building contained crematoria, a morgue, and more rooms similar to the ones described above. This adventure assumes that all of the building west of area 7 has collapsed, but you should feel free to add more rooms and fill them with dangers. Diligent PCs might be able to clear away enough rubble to uncover a passage leading to such rooms.

8. Water Room. For a description of this room and its contents, see the "Water!" section.

Water!

The innermost room of the wing (area 8) contains four wide, high stone tables of enigmatic purpose. (This was the embalming room, and these are embalming tables.) Affixed in the center of one wall is a stone cistern, 4' high, 4' in diameter, and about 6" thick. The surface of the cistern is rough and worn, the result of years of erosion; however, the cistern is still completely intact. The cistern is filled nearly to the brim with what appears to be clear, fresh water that foams and churns constantly.

Carved above the cistern is a line of runic writing. The language is so ancient that no one alive can make sense of it; the runes are little more than gibberish to the party. Roughly translated, the runes read: "The water pure from the realm beyond, for the body corrupt to the spirit hereafter."

To PCs peering inside, the cistern appears to have no bottom. PCs who use a weighted line (or, unwisely, climb down inside) find that the water extends into an underground tank of stone. The tank is 15' below floor level and is nearly 20' in diameter. About a foot of sand lines the bottom of the tank.

On Athas, the discovery of this much fresh water is a miracle, a genuine treasure trove. But why is it here, and how did it survive the ages?

All of the water in the cistern is actually a bound water elemental. It's no ordinary elemental, either—this is a highly intelligent and powerful priest from an elemental civilization in the plane of elemental Water.

Water elemental: INT high; AL N; AC 2; MV 6, swim 18; HD 12; hp 70; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 5-30; SA see below; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, immune to psionics; SZ L; ML 16; XP 10,000; Psionics: nil; casts spells as 12th-level priest; MC1 (Elemental).

The owners of this mortuary summoned and cruelly bound the elemental inside this cistern. Their faith held that bathing the departed in an elemental's water would help the spirit in the presumed afterlife. That belief died with the civilization, but the spell confining the elemental survived its jailers. So the elemental has waited here, trapped and alone, for millennia.

The elemental priest has the spell-like ability to create vast quantities of water (as per the first-level priest spell, but 1,000 gallons per level). Years of special training in the plane of elemental Water gave it immunity to psionics.

The elemental can also shape and animate any water it touches, as though the water were part of its own body. In this adventure, the elemental uses its water animation ability to create dramatic effects. It might shape itself into a huge pool, then send alien forms dancing across the water's surface to intimidate its enemies. Likewise, it might attempt to drown an NPC raider in a globe of water hovering at its fingertips. Aim for maximum showmanship.

Elemental thought processes are so different from human standards that the concept of "insanity" doesn't quite apply. But due to its long confinement, this elemental's intellect certainly has grown unconventional, even by the standards of its race. It has forgotten its name, if it ever had one. Because of the elemental's special nature, the PCs cannot communicate with or command it, psionically or otherwise. More important, they cannot attack, wrench, or otherwise affect the elemental psionically.

The cistern radiates magic (a result of the spell that confines the elemental). Clairsentient devotions such as object reading pick up only great age and a sense of ceremonial cleansing. The owners' alignments were all lawful neutral; their ages, genders, and races varied. Consider the binding spell to have been cast by a 20th-level wizard for purposes of *dispel magic*.

The PCs can drop objects into the water with no problem. However, if the PCs dip out or otherwise attempt to remove some water, the water immediately flies back into the cistern. A PC who submerges his face in the water and attempts to drink it will be able to taste it (it tastes like normal water) but will not be able to swallow it. If the PC attempts to hold the water in his mouth, the water forces its way out of his lips, returning to the cistern in a thin stream.

Anyone who climbs into the cistern is immediately sucked down and buffeted about by the crazed elemental (3d6 hp damage). One round later, the elemental "spits" the victim back out. Observant PCs can note that no water spills out of the cistern along with the ejected person—the spell that confines the elemental keeps all the water inside.

The spell is negated if the cistern is destroyed (the enchantment is such that the elemental itself cannot destroy the cistern). The cistern is destroyed if it takes 40 hp damage (it has an armor class of 10). At the your discretion, adroit use of the molecular manipulation or soften devotions may also destroy the cistern. Destroying the cistern or dispelling the binding spell frees the elemental (with results described in the "Ending the Adventure" section).

Low-level PCs should not be able to harm the elemental, as psionic attacks are ineffective. But even if the PCs have the magical weapons or abilities required, you may decide that the spell that confines the elemental also protects it from harm.

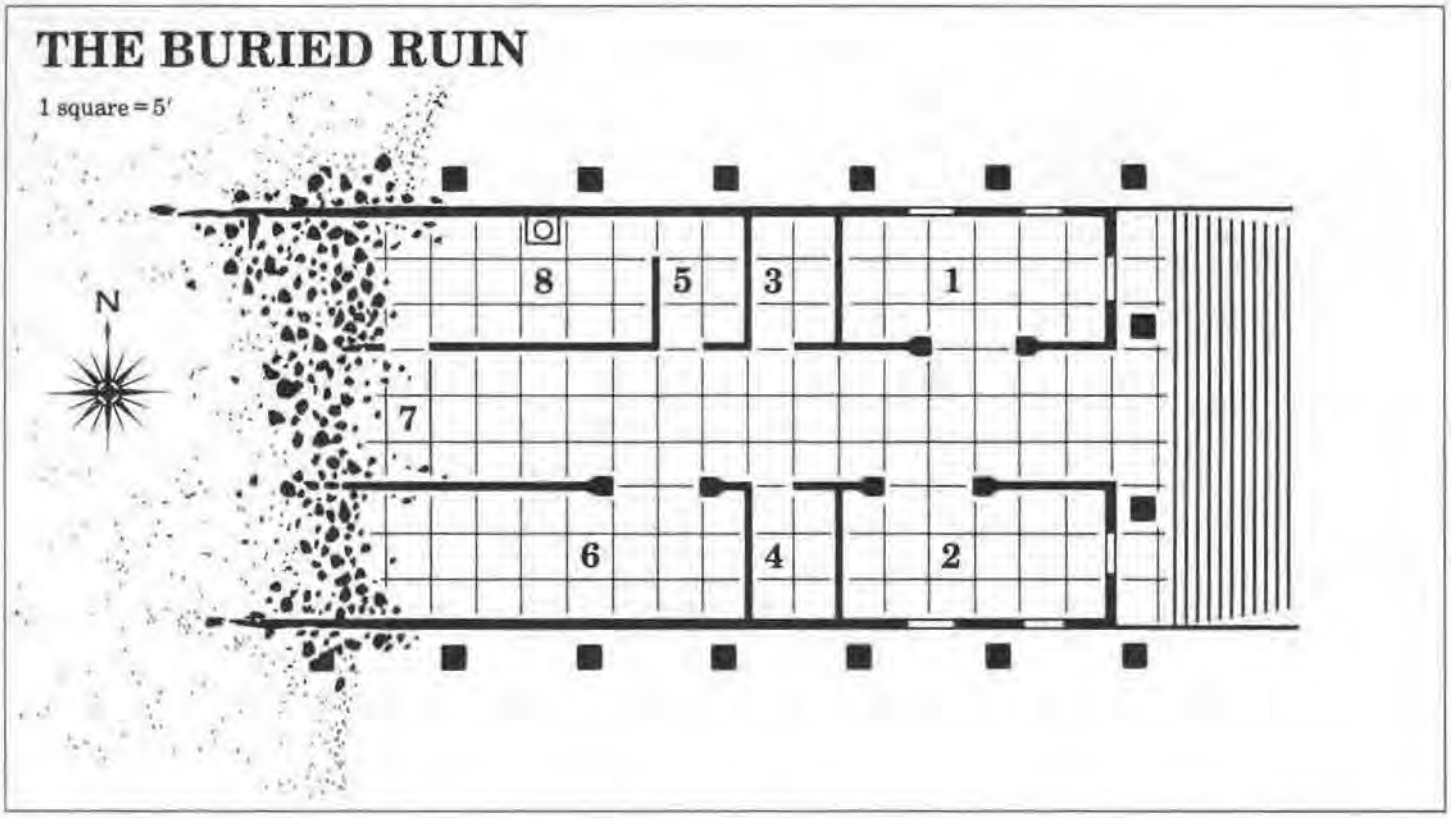
After the PCs have examined the cistern, but before they have a chance to free the elemental, proceed to the "Stranger's Arrival" section.

Stranger's Arrival

If the PCs have posted a guard outside the ruin or are scanning the area clairvoyantly, read this aloud:

> A tall, thin man marches over a dune to the east, framed by the rising sun. He wears a swirling brown robe and carries a wooden staff. As he comes closer, you see his long yellow hair, narrow face, and long neck. He has a strange gray cast to his features, as though he were walking in shadow.
>
> Beside him hops a ratlike creature that bounds along on two muscular hind legs. The creature is about 2' tall; its long pink tail drags behind it. You recognize the creature as a jarbo, a harmless rodent that can sense water. Desert nomads sometimes keep them as pets.
>
> The man is marching resolutely toward this building.

THE BURIED RUIN



If the PCs posted no guard, and the stranger enters the building before they discover him, read this instead:

> There are slow footsteps outside the room. Down the long hallway, framed in the light from the doorway behind, walks a tall, thin man with long blond hair. From his narrow, craggy features you guess he might be about 30 years old. He wears brown robes and carries a staff.
>
> A large rodent, 2' tall, hops lightly at his side. You recognize it as a jarbo, a harmless creature with the ability to sense water, sometimes kept as pets by desert nomads.

The man is Thrassos Haruk. His companion is a jarbo named Hemmer (see the entry at the end of this adventure for details about jarbos).

Thrassos Haruk: AL N; AC 7; MV 12; C5; hp 29; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 15, C 16, I 16, W 14, Ch 14; ML 14; staff; Psionics: sensitivity to psychic impressions (14), 28 PSP. Spells: *create water* (×2), *cure light wounds, light, merciful shadows* (from the DARK SUN boxed set); *aid, slow poison, speak with animals; cure disease.*

In his early life, Thrassos was of neutral-good alignment, studious, diligent, and a bit naive. Eventually, he was recruited as a templar in the city-state of Tyr, to served the mad King Kalak. Thrassos rose slowly through the ranks. By prolonged contact with the evil templars, the impressionable Thrassos gradually and unconsciously became neutral evil in alignment. (See the *Dungeon Master's Guide,* page 28.)

Then Thrassos's immediate superior templar, Hogol Kalak's-Arm, enlisted him to covertly investigate the accounts of a large dynastic merchant house in Tyr. Thrassos found evidence linking a highly placed templar with a plot to overthrow the sorcerer-king and turned it over to Hogol, expecting a promotion. Instead, in a move typical of templar infighting, Hogol exposed the evidence, then named Thrassos as the person responsible for uncovering it. Hounded by vengeful agents of the accused templar, Thrassos barely escaped Tyr alive.

In the years since, Thrassos has traveled the desert, surviving by healing injuries in small villages or purifying water at oases, walking in a constant *merciful shadows* spell. He has become more neutral and withdrawn, speaking little, and has lost most social graces. If left undisturbed, he will eventually become a druid (it remains to be seen whether his imminent encounter with the PCs will leave him "undisturbed"). In his travels, Thrassos has heard rumors of this legendary mortuary and the trapped elemental; he's been searching for the mortuary for some time.

Hemmer (jarbo): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 24; hp 4; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-3; SZ T; ML 4; XP 7; Psionics: sense water (18), 10 PSP; new monster (see page 34).

Hemmer is Thrassos Haruk's loyal pet and indispensable companion. Thrassos found Hemmer shortly after the priest arrived in the desert. They have become fast friends and have saved one another's life several times. Thrassos will do nearly anything to protect Hemmer; likewise, Thrassos takes revenge against any who harm the jarbo. This hardy, harmless creature has the psionic ability to sense water across long distances. It has guided Thrassos to the uncovered ruin.

Role-playing Thrassos

Thrassos has only marginal interest in the PCs; he neither fears them nor is particularly concerned with their problems. He wants to explore the ruin, study the murals, and see if the rumors about the water elemental are true. If there's water to be found, he'd be more than happy to take some with him.

Thrassos means the party no harm, but his manners are very rusty. Like any desert traveler, he views strangers with suspicion. He'll be reluctant to say much to the party unless they openly befriend him and convince him they aren't hostile.

The PCs won't be able to deduce much about Thrassos merely from his appearance. A lone wanderer in the Athasian desert could be anyone or anything: a druid, a crazed hermit, a psionic master on retreat from his students, a powerful defiler, or a harmless peasant. (The PCs probably have not heard of the *merciful shadows* spell unless they are priests, so Thrassos's gray appearance will likely be a mystery.) Still, this uncertainty is a feature of life on Athas, where the key to survival is avoiding unnecessary trouble. Encourage the PCs to meet Thrassos instead of pointlessly attacking.

Getting Acquainted

As Thrassos approaches the building, he can be heard muttering to himself, "Oh, very bad, very bad, Hemmer. Trapped. I think it's trapped." Thrassos is referring to the water elemental. After sizing up the battered ruin, he fears the elemental may be buried in rubble or trapped in some other way. However, the PCs may well think that they're the ones being trapped!

If the PCs approach Thrassos or otherwise draw attention to themselves, Thrassos greets them politely but a bit disjointedly, not as long-lost friends. "Uhh. I see you've beaten me here," he says, sniffing the air. "Mmm. Nice smell. I'll just look around. Where is the water?"

Though Thrassos takes no hostile actions against the party, he is so aloof and so poor at conversation that he may provoke suspicious PCs to attack. If so, Thrassos defends himself to the best of his ability, then plays dead at the most opportune moment. If the PCs insist on soundly thrashing Thrassos, you may wish to intervene, keeping Thrassos from death's door (barely) so that he can participate in the adventure's climax. If Thrassos plays dead or the party beats him unconscious, proceed to "Banneker's Raiders."

If the party doesn't attack him, Thrassos wanders around the building, with Hemmer hopping along beside him. He examines the various rooms, rubbing his chin and mumbling to himself. The PCs are free to accompany him.

If the PCs are polite and patient, Thrassos shares what he's heard about the building (that it's actually a mortuary, and that a water elemental was allegedly trapped here to cleanse the spirits of the deceased to prepare them for the afterlife). He'll speculate, if asked, about the purpose of each of the rooms. He makes only vague guesses, more or less accurate. For instance, he identifies area 5 as some type of storage area but isn't sure what the sawdust represents. He has a few sad comments to make when he sees the murals in areas 1 and 2 ("Why didn't they see what they were losing?"). Thrassos is also willing to share details about his own background.

At some point in the conversation, Thrassos asks the PCs if they've had any trouble with a band of raiders led by a defiler named Banneker. "Quite a brute. Rides a giant lizard. Been active around here for quite some time, so I've heard. Was tracking me for a while, but I lost him." Thrassos has no other relevant information about Banneker's raiders, except for advising the party to be wary of them.

When Thrassos discovers the cistern in area 8, he examines it carefully, tracing his finger along its surface and peering inside. When Thrassos finishes his examination, he announces that the elemental is trapped inside. He decides to release it and tries to enlist the PCs to help. If they refuse, he breaks a chunk of stone from a bench and pounds on the cistern. Thrassos is able to inflict only 1-4 hp damage against the cistern per round. If the PCs don't stop him, he eventually destroys the cistern and releases the elemental (see "Concluding the Adventure" for results).

If the PCs interfere with Thrassos's attempt to free the elemental, Thrassos begins to argue with them, insisting that there's valuable water to be had. The argument is interrupted by the sounds of scuffling coming from outside the building. A high nasal voice calls from the entrance, "In the name of the great King Kalak of Tyr, I bring you greetings."

Banneker's Raiders

The nasal voice belongs to Banneker Last-Man, a defiler leading one of the small raiding parties common in the Tablelands. (Banneker Last-Man is so known because he has sometimes been the last man to emerge alive from a confrontation.) Banneker has made a fair living preying on small parties of travelers, acquiring a reputation for cruelty in the process.

The raiding party consists of the following:

Banneker: AL LE; AC 10; MV 12; W7 (defiler); hp 26; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by spell or weapon type; S 10, D 12, C 14, I 17, W 16, Ch 15; ML 14; XP 2,000; obsidian dagger (1d4 – 1 hp damage); Psionics: contact (16), mindlink (11), inflict pain (13), 59 PSP. Spells: *affect normal fires, charm person, light, protection from good; blur, detect good, flaming sphere; dispel magic, Melf's minute meteors; charm monster.*

Banneker is a short, rather pudgy man in his early 40s with a bushy black beard and long, thinning hair. Like his raiders, he wears leather sandals and a black burnoose with a red sash; he carries a staff of mahogany.

Banneker rides in a rattan howdah on the back of a mekillot, a giant brown lizard with a long tail like a dinosaur. The mekillot ordinarily has a surly temper, but Banneker keeps it under his control with a *charm monster* spell, renewed every two days. Banneker's mekillot feeds on the raiders' victims. Fortunately for the PCs, it has fed recently.

Mekillot: INT animal; AL N; AC 7 (underside 9); MV 9; HD 11; hp 75; THAC0 9; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA swallow victim on hit roll of 20 (save vs. paralyzation to avoid; swallowed victims can use only psionics to attack); crush (instinctively drops on anything crawling beneath it for 2d12 hp damage); SZ G; ML 14; XP 6,000; Psionics: nil; DS (Animal, Domestic).

With Banneker in the canopied seat (but hidden from the PCs' view) is his pet python, Gerda.

Gerda (normal constrictor snake): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 9; HD 3+2; hp 20; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg 1/1-3; SA constriction; SZ M; ML 8; XP 175; Psionics: nil; MC1 (Snake).

Banneker's aides are a sadistic mul called Hurk and a young, dim-witted half-giant named Graddle.

Hurk (mul): AL NE; AC 8; MV 12; F6; hp 45; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 17, D 16, C 20, I 11, W 12, Ch 10; ML 16; XP 420; Psionics: biofeedback (18), 38 PSP; wooden spear (1d6−2 hp dmg), whip (1-2 hp dmg), obsidian dagger (1d4−1 hp dmg).

Hurk is 6′ tall, 280 lbs., and about 35 years old, with coppery skin and rippling muscles. His face has been heavily scarred by the slavemaster's whip. Now he himself carries a whip in addition to his wooden spear (−3 to hit; after inflicting maximum damage, roll again; spear breaks on a roll of 20) and obsidian dagger (−2 to hit; breaks as Hurk's spear). Hurk is a cool customer, a seasoned veteran with nerves of steel.

Graddle (half-giant): AL LE today (E is fixed component; see page 10, DARK SUN *Rules Book*); AC 10; MV 12; F2; hp 38; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; SA and SD as per half-giant; S 20, D 12, C 20, I 4, W 8, Ch 8; ML 11; XP 65; bone mace (1-6 hp dmg), wrist razors (1d6+1 hp slashing dmg, speed factor 2); Psionics: hear light (5), 26 PSP.

Graddle is 11′ tall, 1,600 lbs., and about 18 years old. He makes Hurk look puny. The half-giant is tremendously ugly, with a bulbous nose, sunken eyes, and huge ears. His burnoose is too short for him, and his long, tanned legs show no scars (a clue to alert PCs that the half-giant has yet to see a serious battle). He is prone to bizarre giggling while in combat, but because of his inexperience and slow wits, he may be startled by insignificant threats.

Graddle carries in his sash a bone mace carved from the thighbone of an inex lizard (−1 to hit; breaks as Hurk's spear). He also wears wrist razors strapped to both wrists. This Athasian weapon is a set of three 6″ blades that extend from the back of the hand.

Banneker also leads human raiders, two per PC. The raiders ride domesticated giant black insects called kanks.

Raider: AL NE; AC 9; MV 12; F3; hp 16; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 13, D 13, C 14, I 11, W 10, Ch 10; ML 12; XP 175; shield; short bow with 10 flight arrows (1-6 hp dmg per arrow); obsidian dagger (1d4−1 hp dmg); blowgun with 10 barbed darts (1-3 hp dmg per dart); Psionics: roll on Wild Devotions table (*Complete Psionics Handbook*, pages 20-21); 18 PSP.

Kank: INT animal; AL N; AC 5; MV 15; HD 2; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA class O poison (save vs. poison or be paralyzed in 12 rounds); SZ L; ML 14; XP 35; Psionics: nil; DS (Animals, Domestic).

Half of the raiders carry blowguns, half short bows; all carry obsidian daggers. None of the raiders wear armor, for it is desperately uncomfortable in the great heat. But all human raiders except Banneker carry small shields made of the tough black chitin of the kank (brittle; 20% chance to shatter when hit).

The kanks are soldiers; the brood queen and food producers are at their lair far away.

Banneker's Greeting

Banneker's raiders move to surround the ruin. If they see obvious magic at work, they attack instantly. (Remember, wizards are hated and hunted on Athas, often by other wizards.)

Otherwise, the defiler calls out and greets the PCs in a calm voice dripping with sarcasm:

> "How pleasant to meet new friends in this lonely waste." The bearded man on the mekillot doesn't actually look friendly, though. Neither do the mounted men, who carry weapons of wood and obsidian. Their black shields shine like the shells of the insects they ride.
>
> "I am an agent of the king," says the man on the giant lizard. "His Majesty has claimed this structure and all possessions inside it. I ask you to kindly hand over your water and weapons."

This lie is unlikely to persuade the PCs. If Thrassos is with them, he whispers, "That's Banneker, the raider I was telling you about. Watch yourselves."

If the party doesn't do as asked, Banneker offers a long sequence of increasingly preposterous lies to persuade the PCs to cooperate. (Typical lies might include, "I promise no harm will come to you. Do I not look like an honest man?" "You are trespassing in a building that belongs to my family." "Did I mention that I am, in fact, the son of the great king?" "Not only does my family own this building, we own this entire desert. You are standing in our sand.") Give the PCs the chance to challenge these absurd lies.

If the PCs do hand over their weapons, Banneker's group captures the entire group, including Thrassos, and beats them senseless, then leaves them unconscious and bleeding in the desert. If the PCs can make it to an oasis after they wake up, they may live to learn a hard lesson about trust in the DARK SUN world.

If, however, the PCs decline to surrender, Banneker glances at his aides and then sneers at the party. "Very well then. The time for talk has passed." He gestures for his raiders to move in.

Battle Tactics

Ordinarily, the raiders might try to wait out their victims, but the PCs have the shade and the water. So, unless the PCs surrender, the raiders make a direct attack.

If PCs take cover in the building: The raiders hang back and shoot arrows or darts at any exposed PC, targeting spell-casters first. Meanwhile, Banneker leaps out of the howdah and orders the mekillot to attack. The raiders' missile fire stops as the creature moves ponderously towards the building and attacks the entrance. After a few blows, the end of the roof collapses, burying any PCs who were beneath it (6d6 hp damage). The raiders move in on foot to lure the PCs out into the open.

If PCs are in the open: The raiders use missile fire as long as possible, while Graddle the half-giant makes loud, impatient taunts of marginal coherence. After the PCs engage the raiders, the half-giant charges, wrist-razors glinting in the rising sun. Hurk the mul is close behind.

Again, Banneker jumps out of the howdah and orders the mekillot to attack. The creature lashes at the heroes with its giant tail. Meanwhile, Banneker begins casting spells.

Staging the spell-casting: This is an important part of the DARK SUN world, so try to make the following scene as vivid and dramatic as possible to the PCs.

Banneker, the defiler wizard, is standing on a field of green grass 33 yards in radius. He gestures broadly and casts a first-level *protection from good* spell on himself. As he does so, the green grass turns to gray ash in a radius of two yards around him. Nothing will grow in the lifeless ash. Also, living creatures within this radius feel nauseated and

take a −1 initiative penalty.

On the next round, Banneker casts a second-level *blur* spell, and the circle of ash extends another yard outward. Living creatures in this radius take a noncumulative −2 penalty to initiative.

On the third and six subsequent rounds, Banneker casts *Melf's minute meteors,* once per round, at the most threatening PCs (targeting spell-casters first). This third-level spell extends the ash circle another yard each time it's cast, inflicting a −3 initiative penalty to living creatures within that radius. (Technically the spell extends the ash circle all the way on the first round of casting. But it shows the effects of defiler magic more dramatically if the ash extends incrementally over the next six rounds with the casting of each *minute meteor.*)

Leaping onto the mekillot: A PC may try to leap into the howdah and guide the mekillot. However, Banneker's constrictor snake is waiting to attack the unlucky hero. A PC who defeats or disposes of the snake can try to control the mekillot. This may require an animal handling or riding proficiency check, at your option. If the PC has a riding proficiency other than for mekillots, the check is made at a −3 penalty. Play up the mekillot's vicious and stubborn nature; Banneker's *charm monster* spell does not make the mekillot more amiable to the PCs.

Concluding the Adventure

At some point during the battle, the cistern should break, freeing the water elemental. The mekillot's attack might do this, the PCs may decide to do it themselves, or Thrassos (perhaps struggling back from death's door) may do it without the PCs' knowledge. Try to time the elemental's appearance for a dramatic moment in the battle, such as when a PC faces certain death from Banneker's magic. Alternately, you may free the elemental to provoke the action (the PCs may have to go through Banneker to get away from the elemental).

Once freed, the elemental surges forth like a tidal wave, conjuring torrents of pure water as it heads toward the building's entrance. Maddened by long captivity, the elemental attacks the first target in sight. For maximum drama, try to make this one of Banneker's raiders, or better yet, the mekillot. The sight of the huge lizard, tossed up in a wave of water like a cork, is sure to arouse the party's awe.

Soon, the entire wing of the structure is flooded, and the pool of water grows to cover the surrounding area. The elemental conjures nightmare shapes from the water, shapes that catch and engulf the raiders. Last to be caught is Banneker. The PCs see the wizard's wretched struggles while they (presumably) seek cover. If Graddle or Hurk survives, he loyally flings himself into the water-shape to rescue Banneker, only to be caught and drowned himself. The other raiders and their kanks run for the hills.

If the PCs don't seek cover, they could be victims themselves. Allow them to trick or divert the elemental; nearly any behavior can be justified by the monster's insanity and rage. Or you may prefer to bring the elemental's full wrath upon them, and when things look very bad, bring in rescue from an unexpected quarter.

Thrassos's Reaction. Thrassos Haruk can help the PCs at a crucial point, even if they fought him earlier. Give one PC a chance to gain Thrassos's belated sympathy, such as by rescuing the helpless jarbo, Hemmer, from the rising flood. Then Thrassos might make a surprise appearance (perhaps after the PCs left him for dead), using his clerical understanding of the elemental to persuade it to leave them alone. In this deed Thrassos either dies heroically, or the heroes can escort him back to Tyr and try to get him into the Veiled Alliance, the secret society of preservers and their allies. If Thrassos dies, Hemmer the jarbo takes a liking to one of the PCs and becomes its pet.

Wrapping Up. Once the raiders are taken care of and the entire area is flooded, the elemental rises in a huge waterspout, then vanishes back to the plane of elemental Water with a clap of thunder. The bodies of the raiders drift lazily to the shore of the new oasis.

New Directions

Here are a few loose ends that the PCs may explore in further adventures:

The Haunted Mortuary. Did the mortuary attendants, now dead for long ages, conduct dark experiments here? Did they create a horde of undead, now waiting elsewhere in the ruin?

Jarbo Hunt. The PCs may want to acquire jarbos of their own. Thrassos knows of a large colony at the foot of a distant cliff. The PCs can travel there and befriend the jarbos with psionic powers or bribes of food. Unfortunately, the colony is also the stomping ground for several predators.

Raiding the Raiders. Banneker's surviving raiders retreat to their lair, a barren box canyon 20 miles north of here. A dry stream bed runs through the center of the canyon. PCs can enter stealthily through this wash to surprise the raiders. The warren of caverns along one wall holds their meager treasure (and do the caverns lead downward?).

Half-Giant Groupie. If Graddle the half-giant somehow survives, he may come to idolize one PC who played an important role in defeating Banneker. The half-giant tries to join the PCs, imitates his new idol slavishly, and in general behaves like a big, stupid puppy. Graddle offers to take the PCs to his home village to meet his parents (if he can remember where the village is). Once there, the PCs find the parents have been kidnapped by templars to serve in the sorcerer-king's gladiatorial arenas. Time for a rescue mission!

More Strangers. Until the water dries up, this area will attract caravans and other travelers with appropriate proficiencies or psionics (or good luck). These passersby can hire the PCs as guards or mercenaries.

Buried Treasure. The flood may have reburied the structure under a huge mound of sand, or a convenient sandstorm can do so. But if you like, the building can remain accessible. The PCs can explore it further, perhaps finding necromantic items or other mortuary-related magic.

In any case, the heroes have a new world of adventure before them, and many harsh challenges to overcome in the brutal battle for survival. They can expect that there will always be something new under the scorching red sun of Athas. Ω

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Jarbo

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any desert
FREQUENCY:	Common
ORGANIZATION:	Flock/colony
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Varies (usually night)
DIET:	Herbivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Animal (1)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1-20
ARMOR CLASS:	7
MOVEMENT:	24
HIT DICE:	1-4 hp
THAC0:	20
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-3
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	T (2′ high)
MORALE:	Unreliable (2-4)
XP VALUE:	7
PSIONICS:	Sense water (18), 10 PSP

One of the few herbivores left in the Athasian ecology, the jarbo is the Athasian equivalent of the terrestrial jerboa, a hardy rodent that resembles the kangaroo rat. However, the jarbo is large, reaching a mature height of 2′ at the shoulder. Its coat is typically sand-colored or tawny, but pelt markings vary, the better to blend with their home terrain.

Jarbo species differ in appearance in other ways, mainly in ear size or number of toes. All share the round, gerbil-like body, stubby forelegs, very long hind legs, and long tail. In some species the tail is furred, in others not. All use it for balance as they skitter on their hind legs at enormous speed across the desert sand.

The jarbo has a psionic ability to sense water across great distances, independent of wind currents. This works as a variant of heightened senses, a psychometabolic devotion that applies to the sense of smell and for sensing water only. A teaspoonful of water can lure a flock of jarbos from 100 yards; a sealed barrel, from a mile; and an oasis, from throughout a region.

Combat: Jarbos fear larger creatures and flee from any conflict. They run with blinding speed, their chief defense. The only aggressive jarbos are those who see their masters threatened. Though loyal companions, they are ineffective as protectors; their sharp teeth inflict only 1-3 hp damage.

Jarbos are not prone to disease, but in rare cases a "foaming sickness" like rabies strikes one and drives it mad. The insane jarbo attacks any creature in sight, fighting to the death. Victims must make a constitution check to avoid being infected with a serious disease (as per the common rat; see MC1).

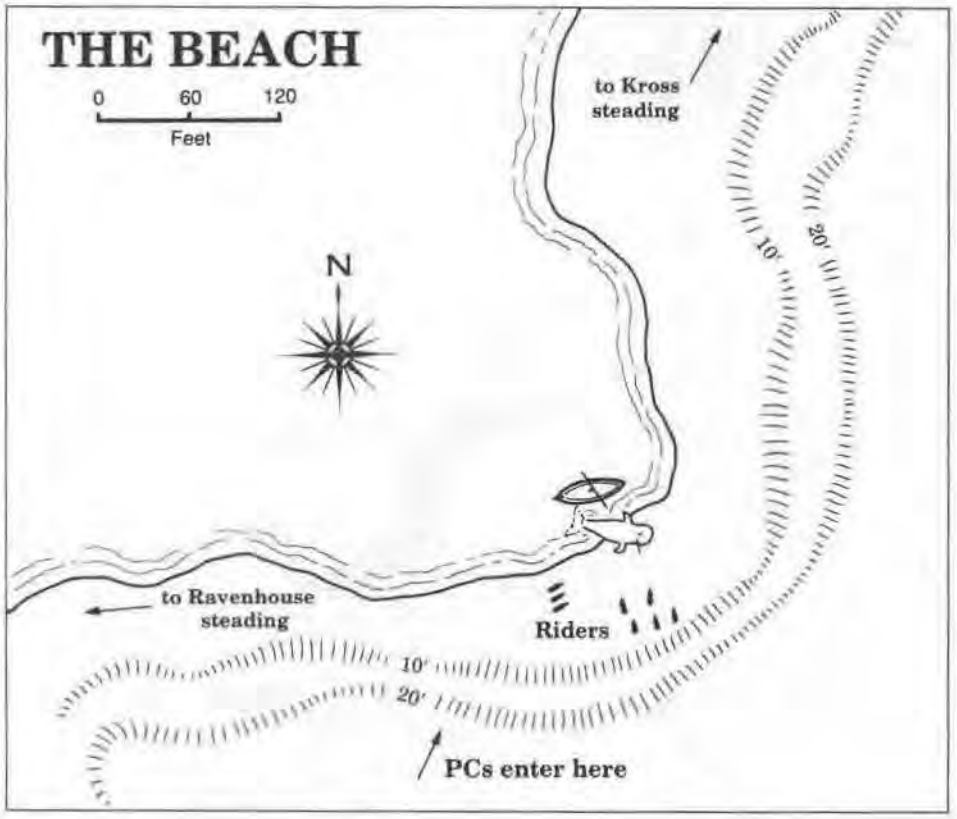
Habitat/Society: Jarbos live in migratory colonies (flocks) that travel by night from one source of water to the next, running ahead of their many predators. On arrival at a new site, the colony locates a dry stream bed or the foot of a cliff and digs two dozen or more nests, each a long tunnel a foot wide leading to a burrow 3′ in diameter. The flexible jarbos easily squeeze through the winding tunnels.

After a few nights or a week, predators finally locate this rich source of food, and the jarbos move on with the next moonrise.

Ecology: Virtually all predators dine on jarbos; the rodents are an important link in the remnants of the Athasian food chain.

Jarbos feed on seeds, grass, and insects. They attract travelers' interest and envy because they can survive on very little water. An adult jarbo can thrive on a few tablespoons of water per day, or go up to a week between major waterings. For the most part, their diet provides them enough fluid. Their ability to sense water serves to help them locate the concentrations of edible vegetation and insects that cluster around what little water there is to be found.

Jarbo pelts are too thin for the fur trade (not that there is much fur traded on Athas), but the small furs are sometimes used as decorations on ceremonial garb or furniture. A good jarbo pelt is worth up to one ceramic piece in some regions.



THE

What would Greenpeace say about *this* problem?

BY WOLFGANG BAUR

This is one of two adventures we had accepted from Wolf before he became associate editor of DUNGEON® Magazine. Look for "The Fire-Giant's Daughter" in a future issue. Wolf worked as an intern for the Environmental Defense Fund this past summer and recently published his first academic paper. He dedicates this adventure to the inspiration for Isolde, Shelly Nichols.

"The Whale" is a short AD&D® adventure for a party of at least four characters of levels 1-3 (about 10 total levels), including two or more warriors. A skald (Viking bard) would also be useful, but any charismatic character will do. Smaller or less powerful groups could still negotiate a peaceful settlement to the problem presented.

The adventure is set in the subarctic and employs rules from the *Vikings Campaign Sourcebook (VCS)*, but it could just as easily be set on the coast north of Waterdeep in the Forgotten Realms.

Guidelines for awarding the experience points listed are given in "Concluding the Adventure."

For the Player Characters

Read or paraphrase the following to the players:

> You have traveled along the coast for several days, watching the last of the summer icebergs drifting by, stopping at the occasional homestead for hospitality and warmth. Winter is near, and the Kross steading you stayed at last night was busily laying in food against the coming cold: smoking meat, drying fish, and rendering fat from seals. From the complaints you have heard, the take has been small this year.
>
> This morning you woke up late after a night sharing mead and song with your hosts. For an hour or so, you have been traveling the coast along hills that fall almost straight into the breakers. Toward noon, you see a small bay ahead. On the beach lies a whale, 60' long and 10' tall, stranded on the shale at low tide. On the far side a sexaering, a small fishing boat, is riding at anchor. Most of its crew has climbed over the whale and onto shore. A white-haired man and a young blonde woman remain in the boat. You don't recognize any of them.
>
> Standing on the shale between you and the whale is a group of armed and armored housecarls on tough little ponies. They carry spears and shields, and one of them has a bow strung and an arrow nocked. One of the riders wears no helmet, and you think you recognize Trausti, the young lord of the Kross steading.
>
> The riders and the fishermen are shouting at each other, but the fishermen look outnumbered and overmatched. Before you can even take it all in, an arrow flies from the archer and strikes the young woman on the boat. The men stop shouting and stare at each other.

The PCs have walked into a potential blood feud. What happens next depends on where their sympathies lie, how well they can bluff, and how trustworthy they show themselves to be as negotiators. If the PCs stand back, the fishermen will attack the warriors, throwing their harpoons and then rushing in with their flensing knives. They will soon be

WHALE

pushed back, and their white-haired leader, Olaf, will call for a retreat out to sea. If the PCs talk or think quickly, the initial battle may be avoided and negotiations begun.

For the Dungeon Master

In the Viking setting, the location of this adventure is Isaland, Greenland, or northern Norway. The precise year is up to the DM, but the season should be autumn. The reason for the party's trip is up to the DM's discretion.

The riders from Kross and the fishermen from Raven-house represent the two nearest steadings, both about two miles from the bay in which the whale is beached. No more people from either steading will arrive before the conflict is settled. Afterward, women from both steadings will arrive to bear away the dead or wounded.

The Whale

The whale was found by a Gimli, a half-witted shepherd from the Kross settlement, who told Grim (the archer the PCs saw shoot the young woman) about it when he saw Grim hunting seals nearby. Grim set Gimli to guard the whale while he ran to the steading and rang the alarm bell. When he had everyone's attention, Grim told them about the whale. Then he and the stoutest men of the steading set off immediately with young lord Trausti leading them.

By the time they got to the bay, a fishing boat from the Raven-house steading had arrived and frightened off Gimli. Olaf, the leader of the fishermen, had ordered his men to stick a harpoon in the whale to bolster their claim to it. They desperately need the whale to survive the winter, and desperate men are dangerous.

The baleen whale swam ashore because it is sick and confused, not because a harpoon drove it there. The whale isn't dead yet, though it cannot move on the shore and shows no obvious signs of life. Druids or skalds who want to make a friend at sea might want to save the whale. Alternatively, a rune-caster who knows a beast-rune (*VCS*, page 35) might speak with the whale. In exchange for its life and freedom, it will offer to teach the PC a change-rune (*VCS*, page 36) that allows him to assume whale form.

The PCs might decide to let the whale go as part of an agreement that neither side get the whale, if the feud has become bitter enough. If the feud hasn't yet resulted in any deaths, the villagers would have to be either defeated or convinced to take compensation before they would let it go. The whale could make the difference between starvation and plenty for both steadings.

The whale could survive if it were floated out to sea at the next high tide. Moving it at low tide without carving it up is probably impossible without magic, such as the use of a strength-rune (*VCS*, page 41) or powerful foreign magic such as *reduce, strength, Tenser's floating disk, telekinesis, raise water,* or *dig* spells.

Whale: INT low; AL N; AC 4; MV 18 (swim only); HD 15; hp 15 (72); THAC0 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SA tail; SZ G; ML 10; XP 5,000; MC2.

If the whale is killed—and it is already half dead—it would provide enough fat, oil, meat, bone, ambergris, and baleen ivory to make a single steading rich and locally powerful or to keep both the Kross and Raven-house steadings alive through the winter. If the PCs gain the whale for themselves, its carcass is worth 1,600 gp or 100 marks; the small amount of ambergris is worth 960 gp or 60 marks.

The Steadings

The Kross and Raven-house steadings are often rivals but have never done more than compete with one another at annual gatherings. The Kross steading is known for its fighting stallions and excellent ponies, while Raven-house is the center of Odin-worship in the region. Both are independent holdings of about 20 thralls and bondsmen, six freemen, and their wives and children.

Trausti rules the Kross steading; he is tough but also wise enough to attempt to avoid bloodshed and share the wealth. Unfortunately, his control over his men is weak because his mother, the matriarch of the household, died only recently and passed on the rulership while he was away as a fosterling with his uncle.

Before Trausti's return, the household was ruled by Grim, the middle-aged leader of the hunters, who has been reluctant to give up power. Consequently, Trausti needs help to keep the whale situation from developing into a bloodbath. The arrival of the PCs makes his position stronger (since he knows them and the Raven-house men don't). Grim wants to use the PCs to slay the opposition, not to negotiate, and he will try to twist things in that direction.

Trausti Haraldson: AL CG; AC 4; MV 12; F1; hp 13; THAC0 20 (19 with sword); #AT 3/2 or 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 14, D 15, C 17, I 11, W 14, Ch 14; XP 15; chain mail, broad sword (specialized), spear, dagger. Trausti wears an amber necklace worth 160 gp or 10 marks as a sign of his leadership.

Grim serves as Trausti's overseer, spy, bodyguard, master hunter, and trusted servant. He is fanatical in seeking to further the Kross family interests and would betray them only if he could be sure that the estate would fall to him. Grim is furious about the false claim of the Raven-house, but he realizes that Gimli the shepherd is hardly a reliable witness.

Frustrated at the situation, he shot and wounded the blonde Isolde as the PCs arrived. Because he knows her as a "witch," Grim sees her as the greatest threat to his men. He doesn't trust the PCs to go along with his might-makes-right approach to the conflict.

Grim the Black: AL NE; AC 6; MV 12; F3; hp 18; THAC0 18 (17 with bow); #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 16, D 16, C 12, I 13, W 7, Ch 7; XP 120; leather armor, long bow, axe, dagger. Grim always carries his money with him: 34 silver pennies and a half-pound tarnished arm-ring of hack-silver worth 16 gp or 1 mark.

The riders are the freemen of the household, armed and mounted but not generally warriors. They wear leather armor and carry shields.

Riders (6): AL N; AC 7; MV 12; F0; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 9; XP 15 each; spears, daggers.

Ponies (8): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1+1; hp 6 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-2; SZ L; ML 7; XP 35 each.

The Raven-house family is very ambitious. Olaf has ruled for years, increasing the family wealth, but he hasn't been as sure of himself since he lost his wife to illness and his sons to the Scots while viking several years ago. He has adopted the blonde Isolde as his heir, although she is a foster-child and the daughter of a slave.

Although Olaf can no longer take his ship south for loot and plunder, his men know him and trust him. He realizes his men are outmatched in the present fight. If the PCs prevent a full-scale battle, he will bluff about the harpoon. If that fails, he will immediately put to sea. He will use his status as a priest of Odin to try to cow the Kross warriors into a favorable agreement.

Olaf Odinson: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; F3; hp 16; THAC0 18 (17 with axe); #AT 3/2 or 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 15, D 11, C 14, I 12, W 11, Ch 15; XP 65; harpoon (1d6+1 hp dmg), hand axe (specialized), flensing knife (as short sword).

Isolde's mother was a slave from Ireland who taught her daughter the magic of the runes. The girl is widely feared as a witch, but the real source of her power is her boldness and ability to charm, even without magic. She is unwilling to bend before anyone and knows how to use her good looks to get her way. At the same time, she is very loyal to her adopted family. She wears a white silk shift under her linen skirt and tunic. Even bloodstained, it is worth 7 marks or 112 gp.

Isolde Dagmaersdottir: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; Rune-Caster 2; hp 6 (12); THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, D 14, C 13, I 15, W 16, Ch 15; XP 65; knife; runes: charm-rune, quench-rune, strength-rune (*VCS*, pages 36, 40, 41).

The men of the boat know they won't win a pitched battle, but if Isolde or Olaf is threatened they back them up. Isolde's wound, though not serious, will infuriate them. Unless the PCs intervene, a small war seems inevitable.

Fishermen (5): AL N; AC 10; MV 12; F0; hp 4 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; ML 8; XP 15 each; harpoons, flensing knives.

Concluding the Adventure

The PCs might join one side or the other in chasing off their rivals, they might try to negotiate a settlement, or they might try to take the whale for themselves, either to save it or to keep it. Although the Raven-house fishermen are the underdogs, the Kross warriors are in the right as far as first claim goes. The spilled blood complicates everything and makes both sides less inclined to bargain.

A victory by arms will be short lived. The winning side will spend a week butchering the whale, carving it up with flensing knives, and boiling down the blubber. During the week they will shower the PCs with gifts such as cloaks, small knives, perhaps even a pony or a trip by ship. The other household will come raiding for vengeance when their relatives arrive in three or four days. They will attempt to burn down the wooden homes of the whalers.

Negotiations should center on who has the best claim to the whale. The settlement most likely to lead to a lasting peace is acknowledgement of the Kross's first claim and an award of half the whale to Raven-house as weregeld for Isolde's wound. Other wounds or deaths would complicate this. If Olaf is killed, a marriage between Isolde and Trausti might heal things, as they have been making eyes at each other for several weeks.

If the PCs try to hold the whale themselves, they will have quite a job as they have no prior claim. If they fail to pay off both groups (who know what the whale is worth), they will be subject to at least one raid in force.

If the PCs gain the whale themselves, give them half its experience-point value and full experience points for anyone they drove away. If they negotiate a settlement, divide the whale's full experience-point value among them. A bard should gain 200 XP in addition for good negotiation. If a feud develops, the PCs gain experience points for anyone they kill. If the whale is set free, give the PCs half its experience-point value, since they now have a valuable ally at sea.

Further Adventures

If the PCs kill or wound anyone on the shore, weregeld will be demanded. If it is not paid, a feud will develop. Likewise, if the PCs take sides, they may well be drawn into a feud that they may have trouble getting out of. If they help the whale without upsetting the families, they will earn the name of "Whalefriend" from the Raven-house bard and will have an ally at sea. The whale will remember them and show itself from time to time during sea voyages, especially if the PCs are caught in a desperate situation where the whale can repay its debt of honor.

If a settlement is reached, the PCs might well be invited to stay with the families for the winter, or invited to return and go a-viking in the spring.

Finally, for a small fee, the party could serve as agents of the families, taking whale ambergris to sell in Hedeby, Uppsala, Trondheim, or some other trade capital. That trip could be an adventure itself, especially if the PCs wish to return to the steadings before winter sets in for good. Ω

Continued from page 2

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GREEN LADY'S SORROW

BY JOSEPH P. O'NEIL

The hells have no fury like a mother dragon.

Artwork by L. A. Williams

Joseph writes: "I am a twenty-six year old NYC firefighter who holds a degree in mechanical engineering. Fourteen years ago, a magazine article introduced me to the AD&D® game, and I've been hooked ever since. My other interests include shoto-kai karate, in which I have a black belt, and reading tarot cards."

"Green Lady's Sorrow" is an AD&D® adventure for four to six player characters of levels 5-8 (about 32 total levels). The DM can place the adventure in any isolated wooded area in his campaign. The PCs could easily stumble upon this adventure while traveling on some other errand.

Several of the creatures encountered in the lower caverns are taken from the AD&D 1st Edition *Monster Manual II*, but enough information is given so that you can play these monsters without that book.

For the Dungeon Master

A large old female green dragon named Pzyruxal is leading a miserable existence. Only a few short months ago, life was very good for her. She and her mate, Razeenin, had acquired a vast treasure hoard and established a comfortable lair. Here they planned to raise their young and lead a life of dragon bliss. Then disaster struck.

A group of adventurers discovered and attacked their lair. The dragons were taken by surprise in a well-organized assault that left brave Razeenin dead. It was only because of his fierceness that Pzyruxal was able to escape. The attackers were forced to concentrate so much of their effort on him that she was able to gather her precious clutch of five eggs and flee.

She combed the countryside for weeks in search of a new home. Finally, in an uninhabited woodland, she found a large, isolated cavern in the side of a long-dead volcano. Pzyruxal moved in and began to prepare the place for the arrival of her young. The occasional minor tremors that shook the cavern were of no concern to her. All she cared about was having a safe place in which to raise her children. Unfortunately, fate was not yet done with her.

One day a major tremor rocked her newfound home while she was out hunting. She returned to find a large crevice where her nest had been. Peering down into the crack, she could see her eggs.

nearly 80' below—unharmed but well out of reach. At its widest, the opening was only 4' across; in some places it narrowed to only 2', far too small for her to climb down.

She had no physical or magical means of retrieving her eggs. Digging was out of the question, since the danger of falling rock crushing some of the eggs was too great. Neither did she possess the proper spells or magical items to recover them. Pzyruxal could do nothing but stare hopelessly downward at her beloved young. And that is exactly what she did for almost two days.

Wafts of steam and hot air blew up at her. She began to catch the scent of burning sulphur and other gases. With horror, she realized that her eggs must have fallen down into some kind of tunnel rather than just a deep hole.

To make matters worse, when she left for a few hours to hunt on the third day (all the worrying had made her ravenous), she returned to find that her eggs had vanished. However, she did see several small, fiery humanoids milling about below. The creatures scampered away as soon as they heard her roar of fury.

Pzyruxal was frantic. All she could think of was finding someone small enough to climb down and rescue her eggs. Immediately she set out to find some "volunteers."

The first creatures she encountered were a hunting party of 30 orcs. She forced most of them into her lair and down the hole—none returned. She kept the remaining dozen or so as slaves, deciding they might be useful in helping her find more worthy candidates.

A few days later, she came upon a small band of human foresters, but those who didn't flee from her she was forced to slay. Pzyruxal was beginning to get desperate.

To her dismay, she realized that she had to locate a group of more powerful humans or demihumans, beings strong enough to defeat the creatures holding her eggs and return them safely to her. She needed adventurers like those who slew her beloved Razeenin!

Pzyruxal's Plea

Pzyruxal has searched tirelessly for her champions. She spots the PCs as they are traveling through her territory on some mission of their own.

Pzyruxal, old female green dragon: INT very; AL LE; AC −4; MV 9, fly 30 (C), swim 9; HD 17; hp 96; THAC0 −5; #AT 3 plus special; Dmg 1d8+8/1d8+8/2d20+8; SA see below; SD see below; MR 30%; SZ G; ML 16; XP 24,000; MC1.

A dragon of formidable size and power, Pzyruxal has the following special abilities:

—She can breath a cloud of chlorine gas 50' long, 40' wide, and 30' high for 16d6+8 hp damage (every three rounds).

—She gets +8 to hit and +8 damage on all of her physical attacks (reflected in statistics).

—Aside from her normal claw/claw/bite attack, she can tail-slap up to eight opponents at her rear for 2d8+16 hp damage as well as stunning anyone slapped for 1d4+1 rounds (save vs. petrification to avoid stun). She can also kick an opponent at her rear instead of using a claw attack. The kick does normal claw damage (1d8+8 hp); in addition, the victim must make a dexterity check or be knocked back 1d6+8 feet. If space permits, she also uses her wings to attack opponents at her sides, causing 1d8+8 hp damage. Anyone struck by a wing must make a dexterity check or be knocked flat.

—She is immune to normal missiles.

—She can detect hidden or invisible objects within 80'.

—She is immune to all gases.

—She can use *clairaudience* in her own lair, at will, up to 160'.

—She has the following innate abilities, usable at will: *water breathing, suggestion* (once a day), *warp wood* (three times per day), and *plant growth* (once a day).

—She saves as a 17th-level fighter, can snatch two victims at once (one per claw), and has +2 on attacks if diving.

—She projects a *fear* aura in a 30-yard radius about herself. All creatures with less than 1 HD and all nonaggressive creatures under 17 HD automatically flee from her for 4-24 minutes. All others under 17 HD must save vs. petrification or fight her at −2 to hit and damage.

—She can cast each of the following spells once per day at 14th level: *dancing lights, magic missile, phantasmal force, unseen servant, darkness 15' radius.*

When she first spots the party, Pzyruxal is flying so high that unless they are actively searching the skies, the PCs are only 5% likely to notice her. She circles around them and comes swooping down from behind the party, passing about 25 yards over their heads. She does not attack them; she simply wants to see how her *fear* aura affects these people. As long as the party is not routed merely by her passing, she deems them worthy of further consideration. Even if the PCs are able to successfully attack during her dive, she attempts to speak with them.

In her desperation, Pzyruxal throws all caution to the wind. She flies 300 yards ahead of the party and lands, remaining in plain view and making no threatening motions but keeping a watchful eye on the PCs. If the adventurers charge, retreat, or do anything other than move carefully toward her, she bellows out her desire to speak with them. She allows the PCs to approach within 60' if they seem willing to talk. If she is attacked in any way, she breathes a half-strength cloud of gas at the party and flies away. She does not wish to kill these adventurers (not yet, anyway), and this should be obvious.

If the PCs are willing to talk, Pzyruxal first introduces herself, then announces that she wishes to hire their services. The dragon is frantic with worry over her eggs and does not want to waste time trying to trick the PCs into helping her. Neither does she want to threaten them, knowing all too well what powerful humans can do.

The dragon gets right to the point, giving the PCs a brief account of what happened to her eggs. She omits any mention of the orc band she sent to retrieve them, since she doesn't want to frighten the heroes off. She does tell them about the "fiery humanoids," describing them as best she can (they are magmen, but she does not know this). Finally she offers the party what she claims is all that remains of her wealth to pay them for the job.

Her remaining wealth consists of a *long sword +3, frost brand;* six potions; and about 11,000 gp in coin. She offers the party 3,000 gp and the sword; if they bargain with her, they may get more. The PCs must be careful not to imply that Pzyruxal has lied to them about her hoard, as she is quick to take offense.

If the adventurers accept the dragon's commission, she leads them to her home at once. The volcano is a half day's ride from the PCs' present location, but Pzyruxal won't allow anyone to ride on

her back. The memory of her beloved mate still burns too strongly within her to allow her to act as a lowly mount for mere humanoids. If, however, a charismatic PC reminds her that time is critical, she may relent.

Should one or more members of the party refuse to help the dragon for moral reasons (a paladin, for example, may not want to help an evil creature), Pzyruxal attempts to mollify the group by promising to take her rescued young and leave this land, never to menace the area again. If that doesn't work, she threatens to roam the countryside, destroying anyone she finds, until the party agrees to help her. If the PCs still refuse, she attempts to snatch one of them as a hostage, but she will wait until the following day to attempt this.

Taking a Hostage

If the party refuses to speak to Pzyruxal, or if, after listening to her, the party refuses to help, the dragon takes a hostage. A fight with the party is the last thing she wants. Killing some or all of the PCs makes the group useless to her. There is also the possibility that the PCs will slay her. Either way, her helpless children would not be saved.

After leaving the recalcitrant party, Pzyruxal flies up and away until she is out of their sight. She doesn't leave the area, though; she uses her keen eyesight to keep track of their progress. The dragon stays high up and keeps the sun at her back. Any PC scanning the skies has only a 10% chance to spot her because of the distance and the glare of the sun. Even if she is spotted, there is still a 50% chance that she will be mistaken for a bird of some sort.

Pzyruxal watches the PCs until they set up camp for the night. Then, under cover of darkness, she swoops in and attempts to snatch up one of the adventurers. She chooses the PC who seems least likely to have some magical means of escaping her, most likely a fighter or cleric. Pzyruxal need only make a normal to-hit roll with one of her claws to snatch her victim. If the snatched PC struggles, the dragon squeezes for automatic claw damage (1d8+8 hp) each round until her "guest" settles down.

If she is successful, Pzyruxal carries the PC to a small cavern she has prepared some two miles west of her lair, at the base of a small hill (see area 2). She deposits the PC in the cavern and rolls a huge boulder over the entrance to seal it up.

After depositing her captive, Pzyruxal returns to the rest of the party. Again she lands nearby and attempts to speak with them. This time, however, she offers only the safe return of their comrade in return for retrieving her eggs. If the PCs still refuse, she may attack them out of sheer frustration (50% chance). If the party accepts, she leads the group to her lair and the adventure can begin. The hostage is released only after the party has arrived at Pzyruxal's lair and each PC has sworn by his god that he will retrieve Pzyruxal's eggs and return them to her.

If Pzyruxal fails to snatch someone, her last resort is to bomb the party from 300′ in the air, dropping boulders, logs, and any other large objects she can find onto the PCs' stubborn heads. These attacks are made on random PCs every 1d6+6 rounds. Because of wind and distance, the dragon has a total to-hit adjustment of −6, but any successful hit causes 20d6 hp damage. Party members taking cover can increase the dragon's to-hit penalty to −16, depending on what kind of cover or concealment they choose (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 62).

She keeps up the bombing until she feels she has the party's attention (assume 3-7 such attacks). She then lands as described earlier and attempts to speak with the PCs again. If they still refuse to help, there is a 50% chance she will attack them out of anger, frustration, and spite.

The DM should try his or her best to convince the party to help Pzyruxal. Even if she does not attack the party outright after all her attempts to persuade them, she terrorizes the countryside for the next several months in her anger. If the party finally does agree to help her, she leaves the countryside alone and instead spends her time nervously fluttering about her lair, awaiting the return of her children.

Crack in the Fire Mountain

It will take the party about four hours of riding to reach the volcano. All the while, Pzyruxal flies slowly ahead of them so that the group can easily find her lair. If necessary, she defends them from any creatures they encounter along the way.

When they arrive, the PCs find that Pzyruxal's lair is some 200' up the slope of the volcano. They must leave their horses at the base and continue on foot. Though the climb is steep and sometimes treacherous, the party should have no serious trouble reaching the entrance.

Once the adventurers enter the cave, Pzyruxal lands and slithers in behind them. Any unfinished business regarding the PCs' deal with the dragon will be settled now. There are five eggs to be found, and she wants them all intact! For now, she gives the PCs half of the agreed price; they will receive the rest when the job is completed.

Pzyruxal may hand over the *long sword +3, frost brand* at either the beginning or end of the adventure, depending on how the PCs are equipped. If they have no real offensive or defensive magic against fire-dwelling creatures, she gives it to them now. Pzyruxal understands the sword's powers and realizes that the party's survival—and ultimately her offsprings' survival—may depend on it. If the party is already equipped to deal with fire-dwelling creatures, she keeps the sword until the end of the adventure. If Pzyruxal was forced to take a hostage, she gives the party nothing.

Next, the old dragon shows the party the crevice that swallowed her eggs. After allowing them a few minutes to examine the hole, she insists that they begin immediately. The PCs should find that an insistent dragon can be very persuasive.

The crevice is rough, offering many handholds, so climbing down is not too difficult. The PCs may need to use a length of rope to get back up, since the crack opens 12' above the floor of the cavern below.

While the PCs search below, Pzyruxal waits impatiently above. The dragon spends most of her time in the lair. Occasionally she leaves to hunt or simply to stretch her wings. If the PCs left their horses unattended, her activity frightens them off. At the DM's option, she might also decide to snack on a horse or two because she has difficulty finding food nearby.

The Volcano's Occupants

Unknown to the party or Pzyruxal, the caverns below are a great deal more lively than would normally be expected. Several weeks before the dragon arrived, an evil mage chose to use this place in one of his foul schemes.

The mage, named Balevan, was feuding with a wizard he wanted to destroy. He decided it would be very helpful if he were able to conjure an efreeti and exact three *wishes* from it. Balevan had visited the volcano once before, early in his career, and knew that he could get to the large lava pool at area 19 with relative ease by entering through the tunnel at area 20. Such pools often provide natural links to the plane of elemental Fire and ease his attempt at conjuration.

Balevan entered the lower caverns through a small tunnel that had originally lead directly into area 19. He examined the cave system to make certain that there were no other exits, then used his magic to collapse the tunnel through which he had entered.

As it was very unlikely that any efreeti he conjured would be cooperative, he thought it wise to prepare a *hedged prison* version of a *binding* spell. This would imprison the efreeti in the lower complex indefinitely, making the creature far more likely to grant him *wishes* in exchange for its freedom.

Once the area was properly prepared, he used his power to open a portal into the plane of elemental Fire. Unfortunately, he got much more than he bargained for.

While Balevan was preparing his trap, a cruel game was being played on the plane of elemental Fire. An evil efreeti named Jafar was hunting magmen. He and his harginn grue flunkies had been chasing the creatures for hours when Balevan intruded on their fun.

When the wizard's portal opened, the magmen raced through, desperate for any escape from the cruel Jafar. The power of Balevan's conjuration took hold of Jafar, forcing him to ride his flame griffon through the portal as well. The grue, eight in all, simply followed their master, unaware that anything was amiss.

When the magmen came through the portal, they swarmed past Balevan into the cavern beyond the lava pool. The mage, startled but uninjured, kept his wits and prepared to complete his *binding* spell. Immediately after Jafar entered, Balevan uttered the last few words of the spell that would imprison the efreeti.

However, before the mage could demand even a single *wish*, the grue entered. The wizard's magic provided no special protection against them. The harginn were not the objects of either the conjuration or the *binding* spell and had come through the portal willingly, so they were unaffected by either spell. They immediately attacked the wizard.

Balevan panicked and tried to use a *teleport* spell to escape. Unfortunately, he was struck by a spear thrown by the largest grue before he could finish his incantation. All eight harginn fell upon the mage in a violent though brief struggle. Balevan had not expected so many creatures to come through the portal and was ill prepared to fight them. Though he did manage to vanquish two of the harginn, he was overwhelmed and slain.

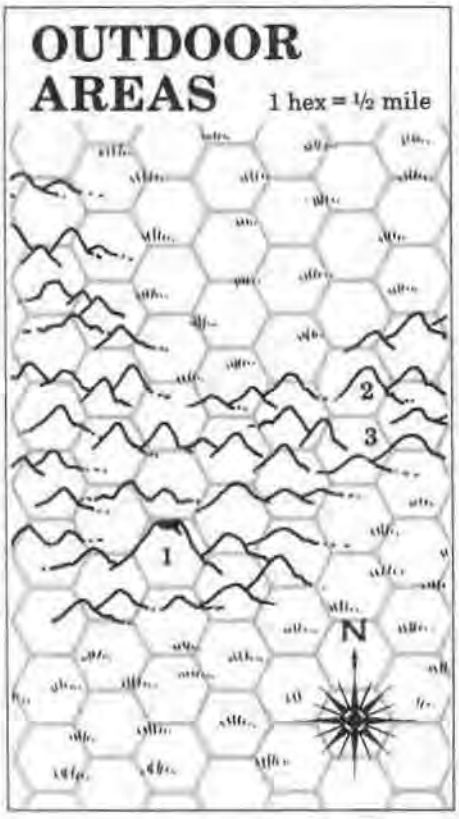
Jafar, still foggy from the effects of Balevan's magic, did not yet realize what had happened to him and watched with amusement as the grue laid low the mage. By the time his head cleared, it was too late. The portal had closed!

Jafar immediately tried to shift back to his own plane but found he could not. The power of the *binding* spell had taken hold, and he was now trapped. Even worse, the only being able to release him from the spell was now dead. Jafar flew into a rage, attacking the harginn and sending them fleeing in terror. He tore at Balevan's body and threw it into the lava pool, along with everything the mage had brought with him. The efreeti's ranting and raving went on for hours, but to no avail.

After a while, Jafar calmed down and began searching the complex. He spent days examining every nook and cranny of every passage and cavern, but he found nothing. He tried over and over again, but he was still unable to shift back to his own plane. He could not use the tunnel through which the mage had entered because Balevan had carefully and completely collapsed it.

Jafar fell into despair when he realized he might be stuck here forever. For a while he sat near the lava pool, hoping that some new portal or vortex would open, but nothing ever happened. The grue waited with him for a while, but they soon grew restless and wandered off on their own. In the meantime, the magmen settled into the maze of tunnels directly below Pzyruxal's lair.

At first, the magmen avoided Jafar, but when it became obvious that the



efreeti was no longer interested in them, they began wandering about the caves. The grue were bored with the hunt and realized that, without Jafar on their side, the magmen might overwhelm them, so they stopped menacing the poor creatures—at least directly. They thought it was much more entertaining to set traps and snares for any magmen foolish enough to wander out into the larger caverns.

Jafar and the grue have no idea that the last big tremor opened a crack leading to the surface. Neither do they know about Pzyruxal's eggs, which the magmen found and have been using for a sort of "easter egg hunt."

Though Jafar and the grue have seen the magmen carrying the eggs from place to place, they have paid little attention. The efreeti could not care less about the magmen's idiotic games, preferring to spend his time sulking. The grues' only interest is in tormenting the poor creatures, but they rarely venture into the maze of passages that forms the magmen's lair. To the magmen themselves, the eggs are merely toys; they have no idea what they really are.

Mrs. Dragon's Neighborhood

1. The Volcano. Pzyruxal's lair is located in an area of low hills covered by dense forest. The dormant volcano she made her home is the largest of these hills. Time and erosion have worn it down so that it is only a few hundred feet higher than the neighboring hills, and trees cover it everywhere except at the very top. When Pzyruxal rests upon the volcano's summit, she has an excellent view of the surrounding area.

Nothing larger than a gopher lives within three miles of the dragon's lair. She has eaten or scared off all larger creatures. No wandering monsters will harass the PCs while they are in or near the dragon's home. It will take the party about seven turns to climb up to the cave entrance.

2. Hostage Cave. This small cave is located at the base of a hill about a mile west of the dragon's lair. Pzyruxal has been using it to hide her remaining wealth while she searches for "volunteers" to rescue her eggs. Once she realized she would have to find a group of powerful humans to help her, she decided to prepare this place to hold a hostage as well. She felt that a hostage might provide a useful or even critical bargaining tool when dealing with humans.

The cave is 18' deep, 8'-12' wide, and a little over 10' high. There is nothing inside but some scattered stones and two large barrels, one empty (for sanitation), the other full of water. Pzyruxal will roll a huge boulder, weighing about three tons, over the entrance to secure any hostage she takes.

Unknown to anyone but the dragon, the back wall of the cave is false. Pzyruxal rolled another large boulder into the back and covered it with dirt in order to hide an 8'-deep section where she keeps her treasure. Inside are 11,000 gp in various coins, six potions (*extra healing* (×2), *longevity, gaseous form, sweet water,* and *oil of impact*), and the *long sword +3, frost brand.*

Treat the false wall as a secret door. Even if a PC hostage discovers the existence of the secret room, he may not be able to enter it. The boulder weighs at least 800 lbs. and requires a great deal of strength (18/91 or greater) or leverage to move. Any object used as a lever must make a saving throw vs. crushing blow at −4 or snap.

If a PC hostage succeeds in breaking into the dragon's hoard, the price may be high. When Pzyruxal opens the cave to free the hostage, she notices that the dirt and boulder have been disturbed. If the PC doesn't immediately return everything taken from the hoard, the dragon will attack.

Three **orcs** (hp 6, 5 (×2); scimitar; see area 3 for complete statistics) stand guard outside this cave when a hostage is present.

3. Orc Camp. This small clearing, about 150 yards south of area 2, is the living place of 11 orcs. They are the remains of a much larger band that the dragon encountered when she first began searching for egg-rescue "volunteers." The orcs live in a dirty collection of three wooden huts surrounding a large fire pit. They know only that Pzyruxal has lost her eggs, and her anger and frustration makes them fear her greatly. The rest of their band perished searching for the dragon's eggs. If there is a hostage in the cave at area 2, there are only eight orcs here. They do not leave the area unless they are on some errand for Pzyruxal.

Orcs (8-11): INT average; AL LE; AC 6; MV 9; HD 1; hp 5 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon; SZ M; ML 11; XP 15; MC1. Each has a scimitar and spear; four also carry heavy crossbows and 12 bolts. They carry 2-5 sp each.

The Dragon's Lair

4. Ledge. After a long climb up the slope of the volcano, the party comes to a broad, flat ledge that is large enough for Pzyruxal to lie upon and sun herself. The ledge is just below the treetop level of the surrounding forest, giving anyone standing here a good view of the sky as well as a clear view of the approach up the slope. The cave opening behind the ledge is 20' high and almost 50' across.

5. Main Cave. Beyond the cave mouth, the PCs enter a long tunnel reaching about 60' into the volcano and opening into a very large natural cavern. In the middle, the ceiling vaults to nearly 80', coming down to about 12' along the walls. A recent tremor has shaken loose many small rocks and stones from the ceiling. The dragon seems to have cleared out her belongings, so there is not much here other than some old bones and a pile of junk.

both near a large crack in the floor on the eastern side of the cave.

6. The Crevice. When the party examines the crevice, read this aloud:

> The crack opened by the tremor is quite long and branches off in several directions. An 18'-long section in the middle of the crack is the only place wide enough for you to climb down. This section is about 4'-6' across and appears to descend 70' into some kind of cavern. The sides are very rough, providing many handholds, so climbing down should be fairly easy.
>
> Beside this opening is a pile of beat-up backpacks and general gear, possibly used for hunting.

If she thinks to ask about previous attempts to rescue the eggs, Pzyruxal admits she sent "a few" orcs down there a couple of weeks ago (actually 22 orcs). If pressed about it, she also tells the party that none of the orcs came back.

The Lower Caverns

The first section of the caverns that the PCs enter is a narrow, twisting maze of passages. They must move in single file here, though the tunnels widen to 12' at odd intervals. The extreme heat in these narrow tunnels is not severe enough to cause damage, but the party must stop and rest twice as often as usual, and needs lots of water. PCs wearing metal armor here lose one point each of strength and dexterity every hour unless they are magically protected against the heat. Once they are able to cool themselves, they regain lost ability points at the rate of one point per turn for each attribute.

The larger caverns (areas 15-19) are not quite as hot as the narrow tunnels. Though these areas are still uncomfortably warm, the party is not affected as severely by the heat, and so does not suffer any ability-point loss for wearing metal armor.

Use the following random encounters while the party explores the caverns below the dragon's lair. Remember to deduct any creatures slain from the total population of the caverns. As a guide, there are up to 30 fire bats, up to 6 grue, and up to 26 wandering magmen.

The Maze (areas 7-14)	**Greater Caverns** (areas 15-19)
1. Hot Spot	1. Magmen (7-12)
2. Magmen (2-5)	2. Fire bats (2-7)
3. No encounter	3. No encounter
4. Fire bats (2-7)	4. No encounter
5. No encounter	5. Fire bats (4-9)
6. Steam cloud	6. Grue (1-2)

Hot spots are superheated sections of stone on either the walls or the floor. Any PC touching a hot spot suffers 1-10 hp heat damage unless he makes a successful dexterity check. These spots occur randomly and last for 4d4 minutes in any particular place. They cover 1-10 square feet each.

Steam clouds are puffs of steam that suddenly spout from cracks or fissures. They engulf up to 1-10 cubic feet and cause 2d6 hp damage to anyone in the area of effect (half if the PC makes a saving throw vs. breath weapon).

Steam clouds and hot spots are the results of thermal action deep within the volcano. Fire-dwelling creatures and fire-resistant adventurers are immune to these effects.

7. First Cave. The party's descent ends in a 12' drop into a large, uninhabited cavern. The heat of these tight passages affects the PCs immediately, as mentioned in "The Caverns." When all the PCs have descended through the fissure, read this description aloud:

> After climbing down the rough crevice, you drop about 12' into a rather large cavern. The walls and floor are heavily scarred by numerous fresh scrapes and cracks, indicating that the place was newly formed by the last tremor. Straw, bones, and odd bits of dragon nest are scattered about, but there is no treasure. As soon as you enter the cave, you feel the oppressive heat close in on you. After only a few minutes, you are sweating profusely.

8. Fire Bat Nest.

> The passage opens into a low cave rank with the smell of the droppings covering its floor. Dozens of brightly flaming batlike creatures flitter about as you enter. Almost immediately they begin closing in to attack!

The ceiling here is only 8' high. There are 1d10+12 fire bats here when the PCs enter.

Fire bats (11-22): INT semi; AL NE; AC 8; MV 6, fly 20 (B); HD 2; hp 10 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 2-8; SD immune to fire, detect invisible opponents; SZ S; ML 15; XP 120; MM2/16.

An equal number of bats attacks each adventurer. Once a bat hits, it fastens itself to its victim and automatically does 2-8 hp burning and blood-sucking damage per round for a total of three rounds. After three rounds, whether from one or more victims, the bat is satiated and flies off to digest its food. In this lair, all the bats fight to the death. Fire-resistant PCs take half damage from fire bat attacks.

If the PCs defeat the bats and search the cave, they find the totally drained bodies of four orcs on the floor. They carry the usual assortment of orcish junk plus the following (picked up while in the lower caverns): 54 cp, 68 sp, 115 gp, and a *gem of brightness*.

The gem is prism shaped and blue, and is wrapped in a silk cloth. Its command word is inscribed within it. In various bat nests along the walls, the party can find 207 pp, 37 gems of various sizes (6,750 gp total), 14 small items of jewelry (5,700 gp total), and three potions (*fire resistance, extra healing, invisibility*).

9. Long Cavern.

> You enter a long, downward-sloping cavern filled with wispy clouds of steam. Three small, fiery humanoids are struggling with an object at the far end. They are forming a kind of monster pyramid—one of them stands on the shoulders of the other two while attempting to place the object on a small ledge about 6' up the wall.

These three **magmen** (hp 11, 9, 8; see area 10 for complete statistics) are hiding one of Pzyruxal's eggs on the ledge. They are just getting it in position as the PCs enter. If the PCs attack immediately, the magmen flee unless cornered. The magmen consider themselves cornered if the heroes block the cave entrance in any way, whether the PCs intend to or not. If they feel cornered, they fight with their molten fists, causing 3d8 hp damage per hit.

If the PCs approach without attacking, the friendly magmen smile and playfully try to set someone on fire. Any PC touched by a magman finds all combustible objects he carries catching fire. This burning causes 1-8 hp damage per round for three to six rounds or until the flames are doused.

The magmen carry no treasure. If they escape, they flee to their lair (area 10) and hide in the lava pool.

10. Magmen Lair.

> Leaving the passage, you enter another large cavern. The ceiling here is much higher than anywhere else, nearly 50' at its center. Several other passages also lead into this place. A large pool of molten lava fills one side of the room. The pool gives off intense heat, but dozens of small, fiery humanoids don't seem to mind as they merrily play in the molten lava. A half dozen of the creatures seem to be arguing off to one side, about 20' away from the lava pool. They are wrestling and tugging back and forth on what appears to be a dragon egg.

This is the magmen's lair. From 13-24 (1d12+12) of them are here at any time. They carry no treasure, as they aren't

Green Dragon Eggs

Pzyruxal's eggs are each roughly the size of a basketball and weigh about 40 lbs. They are thick shelled, somewhat rubbery, and capable of withstanding a good deal of abuse, so they are difficult to damage unless someone intentionally tries to do so. However, between the general heat of the area and frequent handling by the magmen, the eggs are far from safe.

By the time the party begins searching the lower caverns, the eggs have already been here for eight days. Check the following chart at the beginning of each game day to determine the condition of each of Pzyruxal's five eggs:

01-65	Intact and unharmed
66-75	Ready to hatch
76-90	Damaged
91-99	Cooked
100+	Destroyed (broken, crushed, etc.)

Add 3% to the die roll for each day after the party's arrival. If "Ready to hatch" is rolled, roll 1d10 (1: egg is hatching as the party comes upon it; 2-7: egg hatches 1-6 hours after PCs find it; 8-10: egg hatched 1-6 hours before PCs found it.

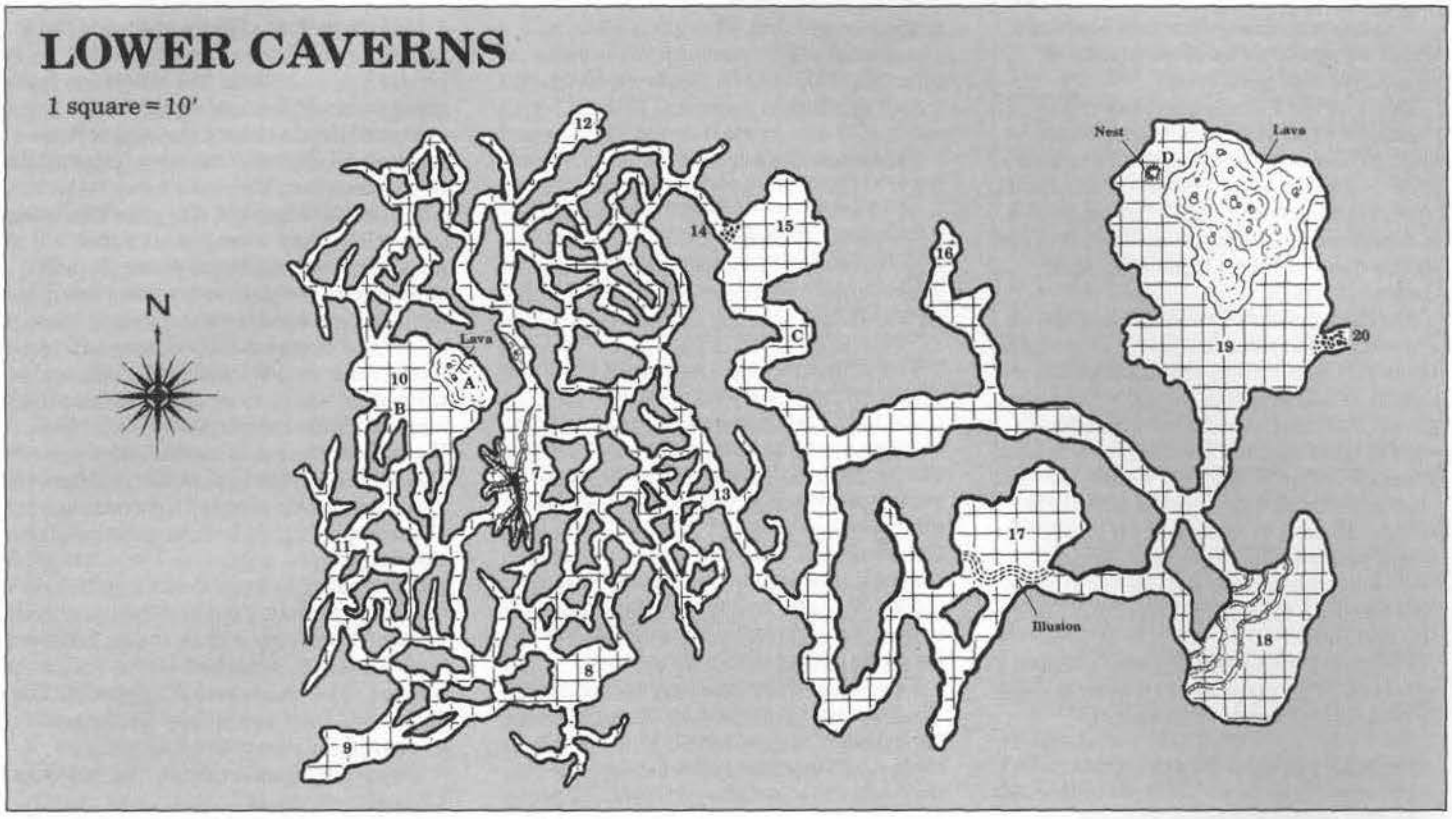
A hatched dragon is 90% likely to stay in the immediate area of its shell, but occasionally it wanders off. Young dragons are weak and ravenously hungry. They can survive for only 1-3 days after hatching unless they are found by the party and returned to their mother. Hatchling dragons are easy to capture and will follow anyone offering them food. If necessary, use the following stats for baby dragons:

Newborn dragon: INT very; AL N; AC 5; MV 6; HD 6; hp 6; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SA nil; SD nil; ML 8. No experience points should be awarded for killing newly hatched dragons.

A damaged egg is chipped or cracked but otherwise intact. Each time the egg's condition is checked after damage is indicated, add 25% to the die roll. This +25% is cumulative, so if the roll indicates damage a second time, 50% is added to the following check, and so on until the egg is destroyed.

A cooked egg is 70% likely to appear unharmed. It is, however, hard boiled from exposure to the heat, and the unborn dragon within it is dead.

The party will not have to worry about the magmen dropping one of the eggs into their lava pool. These creatures have often seen what lava can do to an object, and as they are rather fond of their toys, the magmen do not want to ruin them. Should the PCs decide to hide any of the eggs they find while searching for others, there is a cumulative 5% chance per hour that the magmen find the eggs and hide them somewhere else.



interested in that sort of thing, but there are several lumps of melted gold and silver (formerly coins) that they carried in here and forgot about. These lumps are comprised of 1,800 gp and 1,200 sp, now completely fused.

Magmen (13-24): INT low; AL CN; AC 6; MV 9; HD 2; hp 9 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 3d8; SA combustion touch; SD +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire; SZ S; ML 6; XP 420; MM2/82.

10A. Lava Pool. The magmen spend most of their time in this pool, though they wander around the complex when they get bored. The pool extends into the passage just north and east of area 10, allowing the magmen to exit or enter their lair via the pool. Anyone walking down these passages has enough room to pass by the lava, but there is a 50% chance that 1-2 magmen pop up to greet them.

When the PCs enter this area for the first time, there are 12 magmen in the pool. When the magmen see the party, they merely watch them for the first four or five rounds, then start coming out in pairs to greet their visitors. If the party allows the magmen to approach, the creatures will gladly torch the PCs. If the PCs get into a fight over the eggs on the other side of the cave, the magmen in the pool simply watch, though any that have already left the pool join their brothers in the fight.

10B. Wrestling Match. Five magmen are wrestling and arguing over three dragon eggs. They are trying to decide whose turn it is to hide their toys. The magmen ignore the party unless they are molested in some way. If harassed, or if the PCs try to take the eggs, all of the magmen attack the party. Wounded magmen flee into the lava pool. If they are outnumbered at any time, all remaining magmen flee into the pool.

The magmen are fighting over one egg, but two other eggs are propped up against the wall nearby. Two of the eggs are real, but the third is a fake, fashioned from stone by the grue. The fake looks exactly like the real eggs, but it is 30 lbs. heavier. If the PCs examine the fake egg closely, they may realize what it is, though they will surely wonder where it came from.

If the PCs slay or injure seven or more magmen, the surviving creatures avoid the PCs completely.

11. Dead Orcs.

> The badly burned bodies of five orcs are slumped in this intersection. Their shabby leather armor has been scorched away, and their scimitars have been reduced to twisted hunks of useless metal. Their death was obviously very unpleasant and happened about a week ago, by the look of it.

These orcs were part of the group Pzyruxal sent down to look for her eggs. They have nothing useful on them.

12. Last Stand of the Bloody-Axe.

> As you walk down this passage, you notice blast marks from what were obviously several powerful explosions. As you move farther along, you see that the passage ends in a small cavern. In it, a half dozen magmen are busy piling up the bodies of several orcs that died here.

A mage who makes an intelligence check recognizes the blast marks as caused by a *fireball* spell.

There are six **magmen** here (hp 9 each; see area 10 for complete statistics). When they become aware of the PCs' presence, they attempt their usual greeting of trying to set visitors on fire. If attacked, these magmen feel cornered in the dead end and fight with their fists until slain.

These eight orcs are all that is left of Pzyruxal's first search party. They made their last stand here about three days ago. A tribal shaman perished with this group, and the *wand of fire* that he vainly used against the magmen is still grasped in his hand. The wand has 44 charges remaining, and the command word, "Blaze," is inscribed on it. This wand was part of Pzyruxal's hoard and fell down the crevice during the tremor. The shaman found it while exploring the complex.

The party also finds one real dragon egg here. The magmen had been trying to hide it under the orcs' bodies.

13. Hard Boiled Egg.

> As you round the bend, you are stopped by a welcome sight. One of the dragon's precious eggs has apparently been left in the passage. It is resting in a small niche in the wall, about 4' above the floor.

This is a trap left by the grue. The fake egg is plugging a hot water spout. It is wedged into the spout and requires a combined strength of 30 to pull free. PCs pulling out the egg, and those within 10', are struck by a jet of boiling water that causes 2d6+6 hp scalding damage. In addition, moving the egg releases a cloud of superheated steam in a 15'×15'×15' area, causing 4d6 hp damage to anyone nearby. Those struck by the water get no saving throw, but those in the cloud can save vs. breath weapon for half damage. The steam dissipates after one round. After the initial burst, the water subsides to a small, gurgling fountain. Fire-resistant adventurers take half damage from either effect.

The grue intended this trap for the magmen. Though the steam wouldn't bother the fiery creatures, they would consider the water to be deathly cold (3d6 hp freezing damage to magmen). A pair of grue from area 15 checks on the trap once per day. There is a 10% chance that they stroll by 2-5 rounds after the PCs arrive. See area 15 for the grues' statistics.

14. Stone Wall.

> The passage ends at a wall of mud and stone that was obviously built to block off this end of the tunnel. There is no way to tell how thick the barrier is.

The grue built this wall to prevent the magmen from walking directly into their lair. The mud and stone are about 8' thick, and the side of the wall facing the party was designed to collapse if someone tries digging there. A dwarf or gnome examining the wall will realize the danger. If the party attempts to dig through, the entire face of the wall (about 2' thick) collapses after one round. Anyone within 5' suffers 2d4+4 hp damage from falling rocks.

The noise of the wall collapsing alerts the grue that someone is trying to enter their lair. They assume it is the magmen, and two grue come around through the passages (via area 13) to investigate.

15. Grue Lair. This large cavern is the temporary abode of the six harginn (fire grue). Five of them are normal grue, but one is a stronger boss who acts as the efreeti's lieutenant. All the grue attack the party on sight.

Grue, harginn (5): INT average; AL NE; AC 3; MV 15; HD 4+4; hp 24 each; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4 or 2d6 (spear); SA blink; SD immune to normal and magical fire, +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML 14; XP 650; MM2/73.

Boss grue: INT high; AC 0; HD 5+5; hp 33; THAC0 15; Dmg 1d4+6 or 2d6+2 (spear); ML 16; XP 1,400; *ring of protection +3;* other statistics as given for harginn grue.

Each grue can *blink* at will and always does so in combat. The grue normally attack with a gout of flame that covers a 3'×6' area and causes 1d4+4 hp damage (the boss does +2 hp damage). Grues can dispel all flame magic within 20'. Each grue also has a pair of iron spears that can either be thrown or used as melee weapons. The spears held by the grue are so hot that they cause an extra 1-6 hp damage if they hit. Fire-resistant PCs take normal spear damage.

15C. Egg Trap II. Just outside their lair, the grue have planted another phony egg as bait for the magmen. It is lying on the floor among a pile of stones. Anyone lifting the egg or moving it even slightly causes a large metal net to drop from the ceiling.

The net was part of the grue's hunting gear when they were chasing the magmen on their home plane. It is 8' square and weighs close to 300 lbs. This net can trap up to two man-sized creatures and causes 1-8 hp damage to anyone it falls on. PCs under the net are pinned unless they or their companions have sufficient strength to lift it. Use the maximum press score from the *Player's Handbook*, page 14, to determine whether a single PC or several PCs combining their strengths can lift the net.

If the party examines the egg before touching it, they have a 5% chance per person of noticing a thin chain, hidden under the dirt, attached to the bottom of the egg. The chain is the trigger for the net. A PC thief can safely disengage it by making a successful find/remove traps roll. If the thief fails, the net falls. The noise of the falling net alerts any grue in area 15, and they arrive in 1-3 rounds, expecting to find trapped magmen.

If the party is able to search this area, they find no more than some piled rocks (grue furniture), a few odd weapons and metal tools, and three 25'-long coils of very strong, thin, fire-resistant steel chains (the equivalent of rope on the grues' home plane of elemental Fire). Five additional coils of chain were used to fashion the metal net. Each coil weighs 60 lbs. and is five times stronger than any normal rope. The chains are not magical, but each coil could be sold for 150 gp.

The only other treasure to be found here is 3,500 gp in small gems, distributed among the grue, and the *ring of protection +3* that the boss wears. Anyone who wishes to use the armor must wait at least one hour for it to cool down to a tolerable temperature.

16. Egg Trap III.

> At the end of this short passage, you find a large hole in the floor. The rough shaft is about 6' in diameter and nearly 10' deep. Another dragon egg rests at the bottom.

This is another egg trap set by the grue. It is obvious that the sides of the shaft are weak and could easily collapse. If the egg is moved, that is exactly what happens. Anyone in the shaft when it collapses suffers 4d6 hp damage and must save vs. petrification or be completely buried. Buried PCs suffocate in 2-4 rounds.

The trick here for the party is to figure out if the egg is real or not, and if it is real, to get it out without someone being buried alive. The egg is a fake, but the PCs may not discover this until they've already gone to a lot of trouble.

Three chains attached to the bottom of the egg trigger the trap. A thief may attempt to remove the chains and disarm the trap by a successful find/remove traps roll for each chain. If he fails, the shaft collapses, burying both PC and egg. The PCs can't see the chains unless he climb down into the hole.

17. Illusory Room.

> No further progress into this cavern is possible because a small reservoir of cool, dark water blocks your path. The reservoir fills the entire cavern and is apparently fed by water you hear dripping down through the ceiling.

The water is merely an illusion created by the efreeti to keep the magmen from wandering into his lair. the pool vanishes if one of the PCs physically touches the "water" but not if they throw something or dip a pole into it. The cavern itself is empty and rather dusty.

18. Efreeti Lair.

> From the entrance to this very large cavern, several 3'-high stone tiers descend like stairs to its bottom. At the lowest level, near the back wall, a flame-colored giant with small black horns and huge clawed hands sits alone at a rough stone table that holds a strange game board. He is too self-absorbed to notice you yet, but he doesn't seem very interested in the game. He appears to be rather depressed, as he sits there mumbling things like, "Oh, poor me," and "Why have I been cursed so?"

The efreeti, Jafar, is playing solo chess on a board with pieces he fashioned himself from stone. This is his 1,023rd game, and he is feeling very sorry for himself. He doesn't notice the PCs when they first enter, so if the adventurers attack him immediately, they gain +2 to surprise the efreeti.

If the PCs do not attack, Jafar's first reaction is anger at their intrusion. Elation quickly replaces his anger when he realizes that, if humans were able to get into the caverns, there must be a way out. As soon as he realizes this, Jafar pretends to be very friendly to the party, asking how they came to be here and mentioning how glad he is to have company. When he hears about the newly formed crevice leading to the surface, he begins packing up his possessions.

As long as the PCs do not bother him and don't try to stop him, the efreeti is very likely to leave without molesting them. The only problem occurs when he summons his servants to leave. If he discovers that his griffon or any of the grue were slain by the party, he flies into a rage and demands retribution: payment of all that the PCs own.

Jafar (efreeti): INT very; AL LE; AC 2; MV 9, fly 24 (B); HD 10; hp 56; THAC0 11; #AT 1; Dmg 3-24; SA spells; SZ L; ML 17; XP 4,000; MC1 (Genie).

Jafar can do the following at will, once per day, as a 10th- level wizard: grant up to three *wishes*, become *invisible, assume gaseous form, detect magic, enlarge, polymorph self, create illusion, wall of fire.* He can also *produce flame* and use *pyrotechnics* as often as he desires.

Depending on the situation, Jafar uses his *wall of fire* either as a protective ring around himself or as a way to seal off the party's escape. In combat, he wields a huge scimitar. He also has three *javelins of lightning* under his chess table. He uses them only if he judges that the party might be a bit too strong for him to handle.

There is very little in the room other than some crude stone furnishings and several large sacks containing Jafar's possessions. Aside from normal gear, the party can find two gold armbands (worn by Jafar and worth 1,500 gp each), 24 large gems (11,140 gp total), two potions (*fire giant strength* and *super heroism*), plus the three *javelins of lightning*, if they were not used in combat.

19. Main Lava Pool

> The noxious odor of sulphur fills your nostrils as you enter this cavern. A great lava pool churns and bubbles in the middle, casting a dull, reddish glow over the rest of the cavern, which is otherwise empty. The heat is so intense that anyone not protected from it is forced to back out immediately.
>
> After a moment, you see a large, winged creature rise up out of the lava. It walks along the top of the pool and out onto the stone floor near the back of the cave. The creature seems to be composed of solid flame. After squinting a bit, you can see that it has some kind of nest back there.

The creature is a flame griffon. It is Jafar's steed and obeys only him. Aside from being native to the elemental plane of Fire, it is identical to a normal griffon.

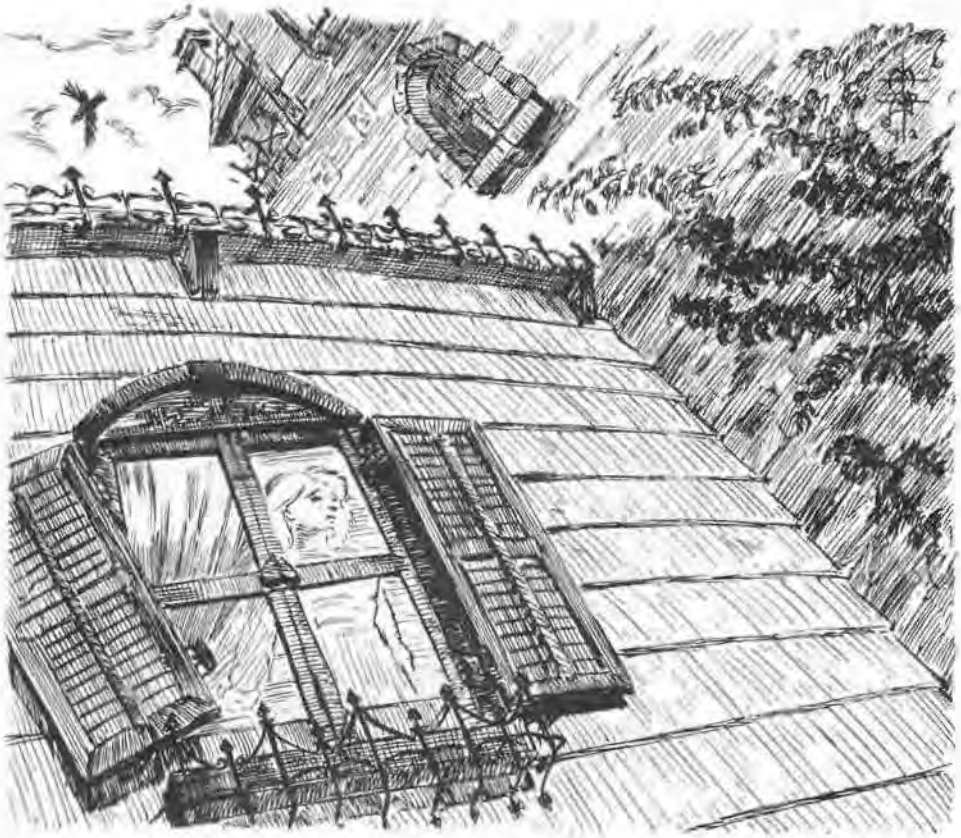
Griffon: INT semi; AL N; AC 3; MV 12, fly 30 (C); HD 7; hp 36; THAC0 13; #AT 3; Dmg 1-4/1-4/2-16; SD see below; SZ L; ML 15; XP 975; MC2. Due to the griffon's elemental nature, it is immune to fire. If, however, the PCs throw water at the griffon, it suffers 2-8 hp damage per gallon used.

The griffon found one of the real dragon eggs and adopted it. At the back of the cave, she has constructed a nest of stone for the egg and cares for it as if it were one of her own. Unless someone tries to take the egg, or the griffon is attacked, she regards the party with simple curiosity. Should the PCs attempt to touch the egg, she attempts to tear them to pieces. The griffon has no treasure.

The DM should add 50% to the roll when the condition of this egg is checked. Any roll totalling over 91% indicates that the egg is hard boiled.

20. Collapsed Tunnel. This was the small tunnel that Balevan originally used to enter the lower complex. It has been completely collapsed, and none of the volcano's present occupants are aware of it. A PC dwarf or gnome has a 50% chance of discovering it, but only if they intentionally examine this section of wall. Digging out the tunnel proves to be nearly impossible because it is filled with earth and stone for its entire 160' length.

Continued on page 70



THE GHOST OF MISTMOOR

BY LEONARD WILSON

Trouble always comes in threes.

Artwork by Tom Dow

Leonard writes: "Really good haunted house adventures are few and far between. I hope this is one of them. I only regret that the RAVENLOFT™ boxed set hadn't yet been released when I started writing 'Mistmoor.' Any DM with access to this set who doesn't at least borrow its system of fear and horror checks will be selling this adventure short." Leonard is the author of "Through the Night" (DUNGEON® issue #29) and has also written The Heart Blade, *an adventure in romance for Chaosium's PENDRAGON game.*

"The Ghost of Mistmoor" is an AD&D® adventure designed for 3-5 characters of 3rd-6th level (about 18 total levels). This module works best with a well-rounded party of good-aligned characters, and the inclusion of at least one priest is essential. There should also be at least one male human, elf, or half-elf in the party.

For the Player Characters

Two weeks of scouring the heath has convinced you that the rumors of a young black dragon lairing in the area are just that: rumors. A shame, if its hoard had been but a fraction of what it was said to be.

The rain that has been a constant companion in this dismal land has slowed to a halfhearted drizzle. Weary and muddled, desiring nothing so much as a long, hot bath, you arrive at the lonely village of Mistmoor—the closest thing to civilization for some days' travel—just as the sun takes on the first red tinge of dusk.

The town is all but silent, its single street empty. The only reassurance you have that the village hasn't been deserted is the warm light spilling from the windows of the inn and the faint chatter that accompanies it.

As you approach the inn, the door swings open. A tall, dusky warrior steps out and strides off purposefully toward the stable. The inn door starts to swing closed, then suddenly slams back open as a smaller, well-dressed young man rushes out after the first.

"Giles, you can't do this!" he shouts, in a state somewhere between rage and hysteria.

The other man turns slowly back and fixes him with a stony glare. "I'm only the messenger, Lord Blaine. You'll have to take it up with the duke."

"I never asked for . . ."

"Take it up with the duke."

"It's about his daughter, isn't it? She never told me who she was, I swear! It's not my . . ."

The warrior turns his back and strides on toward the stables, ignoring the younger man who runs after him, still babbling hysterically.

For the Dungeon Master

Giles, an unremarkable 1st-level fighter, is "only a messenger" as he claims to be, and unless delayed by some perverse adventurer, will immediately mount his horse and disappear from the adventure altogether. The important character here is Lord Blaine.

Blaine: AL NG; AC 2; MV 9; F2; hp 15; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type; S 12, D 16, C 15, I 14, W 7, Ch 15; ML 14; long sword, chain mail, shield.

Blaine is a young nobleman who has recently inherited the title of "viscount." At the moment, however, it's not a title he covets, and until his current problems are solved, he won't even notice, much less care, if no one addresses him by it.

Along with his title, Blaine inherited the wealth of his family. He also inherited its debts to the local duke. The duke has harbored a dislike for Blaine ever since he caught the young man philandering with his daughter. Being a strict believer in law, however, the duke has waited for this very legal opportunity to ruin Blaine. He has demanded that all debts—the back taxes associated with the estate—be paid in full within the week.

Blaine's inheritance, in theory, should cover his debts. The reality is another matter. Two hundred years ago, his was one of the most wealthy and influential families in the land. Then a tragedy struck that is still shrouded in mystery: one of the viscount's daughters is said to have gone insane and bloodily murdered most of the family, then killed herself in remorse.

Legend has it that the viscount's wealth was—and still is—locked away in a secret vault somewhere in the ancestral manor, but he took the knowledge of exactly where it was and how to open the vault to his grave. The manor, haunted by the insane girl's ghost, was abandoned after the tragedy. The family had a new and somewhat more modest home built in town. In succeeding generations, they sent several expeditions to the manor to try to rediscover the vault. None succeeded. Few even made it out alive.

Finally the viscounts gave up and accepted their relative poverty, and eventually came to think of the lost treasure as genuinely lost. But Blaine, never the most practical of men, started dreaming about the ancient treasure almost as soon as it became legally his.

Not taking the ghost too seriously, he set out with some friends and some of the villagers to see if they could find the elusive vault. They'd barely gotten inside the manor when something spooked the horses. The party rushed back outside just in time to see them snap their tethers and gallop off. Several of the group were sent to round up the horses, but there was no sign of what had spooked them.

When Blaine turned to go back inside the house, he looked up and saw a young, dark-haired woman watching from an upstairs window. She stepped away when he called to her, and when they arrived at the bedroom where she'd been, the room was empty. The dust lying thick on the floor was undisturbed. Scrawled in fresh blood on the wall were the words, "I shall not rest ere all my kin rest with me."

As Blaine was withdrawing nervously, a startled cry came from one of the men downstairs. Blaine rushed down and followed a trail of footprints into the dining room, where the tracks ended abruptly. A second message was scratched there in the dust: "Soon, dear cousin, I come for you."

Blaine hasn't been in the manor since. He thought he wouldn't go back to save his own life, but now that's almost what the situation boils down to. The problem is that no one else will go with him, and even if he had the courage to go alone, he could never find the vault in time.

After his little scene outside, Blaine rushes back to the inn and starts pleading with all of his acquaintances, but nothing will persuade the locals to return to the manor. Finally, he's forced to turn to the PCs.

Other than his inheritance, Blaine owns nothing of particular value—most of what money he does have goes to keeping up an appearance appropriate to nobility—and he has no idea how much wealth is actually in the vault, so paying the PCs for their services could prove a problem. He'll go as far as offering 2,000 gp to be divided among the group if they prove successful (plus any minor valuables found lying around the house, excluding unique family heirlooms), but will not feel secure in promising more.

Although Blaine probably made a poor first impression (let's see *you* hold it together when you hear from the IRS about that million you owe in back taxes) and is extremely naive, he's not a bad sort. When he's not busy panicking, he can be quite charming and quick witted. He's also more courageous than he gives himself credit for. He may not remain calm and rational in the midst of a fight, but he won't run, especially if it means deserting his comrades.

If the PCs accept this job, he will go along with them just to be there, but won't make any pretense of leading the expedition. For the most part, he'll remain quietly in the background, trying to stay out from underfoot while the PCs do their job. He won't rush into the middle of combat, but neither will he hesitate to lend a hand if it looks like his help is needed.

Getting to the Manor

If the PCs agree to take the job, Blaine insists that they set out first thing in the morning, though the rain has picked up again to a moderate shower and is threatening worse. He doesn't have any time to waste.

Mistmoor Manor lies about 10 miles due west of the village, at the end of an ancient, disused road. It sits on the closest thing to a promontory that this marshy lowland has to offer: a broad hill that peaks about 20′ above the surrounding terrain. The south and east sides of the hill are rocky cliffs (nothing that can't be climbed easily, but impassible to horses), and the road winds around to approach the manor from the north.

The "Ghost"

The woman responsible for scaring Blaine away is alive and breathing. She's a very bright, very talented young thief named Psyche.

Psyche: AL CG; AC 7; MV 12; T7; hp 27; THAC0 17; #AT 2; Dmg by weapon type; S 8, D 17, C 11, I 17, W 11, Ch 17; ML 11; PP 15%, OL 15%, F/RT 15%; MS 80%, HS 80%, DN 15%, CW 80%, RL 0%; short sword, dagger, *ring of spell storing* with *cantrip* (×3, one of which

has already been cast), *slippers of a zephyr* (magical shoes that impart the same ability to the wearer that *horseshoes of a zephyr* do to equines).

Psyche also carries a small vial of acid and a vial of fake blood—a berry juice concoction—both of which she uses for haunting effects. (Tasting the fake blood will reveal it for what it is, but otherwise only a skilled herbalist could identify it.) She fights using a sword/dagger combination, the dagger at −2 on attack rolls. In addition to her normal thieving skills, she is a talented disguise artist, as per the disguise nonweapon proficiency.

Psyche is a local girl who ran away to the big city to make her fortune. She did well enough "accepting contributions" from those who could afford to support her, but she never struck it rich—she didn't have the heart to steal anything extremely valuable—so she tried adventuring for a while. It was during that time that she met her lover and accomplice, Broc.

Psyche soon came to the conclusion that she didn't care for the violent life of an adventurer, though. People got hurt, and she was often one of them. Casting about for a way to make her fortune once and for all, she remembered the stories she'd heard from her childhood about the treasure of Mistmoor Manor.

Psyche never believed in ghosts. All she knew from adventuring were fleshy, living monsters like orcs and bugbears—problems that a good sword to the back could solve. She and Broc marched fearlessly in to take up residence in the manor while they searched for the treasure.

Broc: AL CG; AC 7; MV 12; F4; hp 34; THAC0 15; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type +3; S 17, D 12, C 16, I 14, W 13, Ch 14; ML 14; battle axe, *leather armor +1, cloak of elvenkind.* He has specialized in the use of the battle axe; this ability is reflected in his statistics.

Broc is mute from a sword thrust to the throat incurred while adventuring. He still bears the scar, and only the timely healing of the group's priest saved his life. Broc is a seasoned veteran of 30 (about a decade older than Psyche) who saw one battle more than he cared to stomach. When Psyche suggested they get out of the adventuring game, he was happy to comply. His silence makes a striking contrast to the vivacity of his young partner.

Most of the time (80%, where the text doesn't dictate otherwise) that the party spends searching the manor, Psyche is tailing behind them, tracking them by sound while she hangs back a couple of rooms, waiting for the party to discover something of significance or leave her an opening to spook them.

The PCs will probably be marching about noisily across the creaking wooden floors, wearing metal armors, and talking among themselves. Psyche glides silently and tracelessly about on her *slippers of a zephyr.* She uses her move-silently skill to slip quietly through doors, and her climb-walls ability to escape out windows and to the roof when necessary. If completely cornered, she tries to hide in shadows and hopes that the PCs overlook her.

When Psyche isn't trailing the party, she goes down through the dungeons of the manor to area 40 for a brief rest and a bite to eat. Broc is in the crawlspace under the manor (see area 24) at all times when the text doesn't place him elsewhere.

It should be stressed that Psyche and Broc are treasure hunters, not murderers (their alignments are chaotic good). They are rogues, inspired by greed but possessed of a level of conscience they're not always comfortable admitting to. Their hauntings are designed to scare and discourage, never to harm, and they won't engage in combat unless forced to. They simply believe they have as much right to the treasure as anyone, no matter what the letter of the law says.

However, Psyche and Broc quit the adventuring life because they'd gotten sick of seeing blood spilled for the sake of money. If they hear of Blaine's dire straits, they'll probably stop trying to scare him away (finding the money is pretty much a matter of life or death to him). They may even offer their help, their roguish natures soothed by an appropriately negotiated share of the proceeds and Psyche's schemes to steal the duke's share from his tax collectors before it reaches the safety of his coffers.

Just because Psyche is responsible for scaring off Blaine doesn't mean the manor isn't haunted. In truth, there are real ghosts residing there. Psyche hasn't seen them yet because they'd pretty much gone to sleep after the visitors stopped coming, but her searchings have disturbed their uneasy rest. The ghosts are the daughters of the viscount who was murdered: identical triplets named Reveri, Rebecca, and Regine.

A note should be made here as to the unusual ecology of the ghosts of Mistmoor. The sisters fully retain their original alignment and personalities. They neither hate the living nor hunger for life essence, though they're far from happy being caught between life and death. They do retain all the powers typical of ghosts, but those powers are under their conscious control. Neither their touch nor the sight of them will cause aging unless they wish it. When partially solidified, the sisters have a limited ability to affect the material plane. Their touch can be faintly felt, like a cool breeze upon the skin, and with concentrated effort, they can lift and manipulate light objects (about 5 lbs. or less).

Reveri, ghost: INT exceptional; AL NG; AC 0 (8 to ethereal opponents); MV 9; HD 10; hp 46; THAC0 11; #AT 11; Dmg age 10-40 years; SA fear (save vs. spells at sight or age 10 years and flee for 2-12 turns), *magic jar;* SD ethereal unless attacking, struck only by silver or magical weapons, affected only by spells of ethereal spell-casters; SZ M; ML special; MC1. Remember that, when fully ethereal, a ghost can be affected only by other ethereal creatures.

In life, Reveri was a poet of rare talent. Had she not died at 17, she would certainly have gone on to become a literary figure of renown. As it is, the many volumes that she penned in the quiet of the library or alone in her room sit forgotten in the manor, collecting dust.

Never an outgoing person, Reveri is even more shy in death than she was in life. Visitors to the manor are unlikely to catch more than a glimpse of her until they somehow gain her trust. Reveri does not have a violent personality, and she'll do nothing to harm the party unless seriously provoked.

Rebecca ("Becky"), ghost: AL CG; hp 46. Rebecca is only slightly more prone to violence than her sister Reveri. Unless the PCs are particularly belligerent, they aren't likely to make an enemy of her, either.

Rebecca is as outgoing as Reveri is shy, and as much in love with the sensual world as Reveri is with contemplation. Decades after her death, Reveri came to terms with her undead existence, but Becky hasn't adjusted as well.

Cut off from her dearest pleasures, she's gone a bit crazy and lives in a fantasy world of the past. She won't admit to being a ghost unless absolutely forced to face facts.

Becky's fantasies focus on the pleasure she misses most, the companionship of Tommy, her (formerly) betrothed.

Regine, ghost: AL CN; hp 36. Regine is the dangerous ghost, the actual murderess. While not really evil and not particularly cruel, she is nonetheless completely insane and unpredictable. She's also the pawn of the true evil at work in Mistmoor. Still, even Regine won't use her aging attacks lightly.

Even at the best of times, Regine was moody and self-absorbed. When the girls' mother died giving birth to their younger brother, Regine withdrew further, and things only got worse from there. She remains very childish and childlike in her motivations, with no real thoughts of the future and no attachments to the past, other than those moments she'll occasionally relive in fits of nightmare hallucination. Her attention span is almost nonexistent.

A Shadow Over Mistmoor

In their prime, the Mistmoors were the major supporters of an important, good-aligned goddess, thus making themselves major enemies of the evil goddess who was their patron's opposite number. At the urging of this lady of darkness, one of her favored priests infiltrated the Mistmoor household to sow mischief.

The priest's name was Erebus. He owned a magical cloak that allowed him to assume the form of a raven, and it was in this form that he had himself left anonymously as a pet for Regine among her presents at the lavish celebration of the triplets' 15th birthday. Erebus passed himself off to Regine as a magical creature—a raven able to assume the shape of the darkly handsome man that was in truth his natural form—and promised to remain her attentive and faithful friend for as long as she kept his nature a secret. Magical animals, he assured her, lost their magic if it was known to any but their most special friend. In her naivete she never thought to doubt him.

With honeyed words and seductive magicks, Erebus wormed his way into Regine's confidence, then began playing games with her fragile psyche. His manipulations were many, and his secret cruelties knew no bounds. He began lacing her meals with addictive hallucinogens irregularly, sending her into fits of seeming madness and repeated, torturous withdrawals. The family did its best to care for Regine, but no priest could heal her, no words could soothe her, and she grew to rebuke all concerns for her state of mind with increasing vehemence.

At last the family was forced to confine Regine to her room for everyone's safety. Erebus, who could still come and go at will via the window, didn't lost a moment convincing Regine that her imprisonment was part of a continued plot against her. After seeing to it that she was as violently unbalanced as she'd ever been—lost in a drug-enhanced paranoia that centered on her family—Erebus unlocked her door and placed a magically envenomed dagger in her hand.

Rebecca was the first to die, caught off guard when she went to answer the knock at her door. The short scream she managed was drowned out by a crash of thunder from the stormy night outside. Donning her sister's clothes, Regine moved freely about the house after that, killing as she pleased. By dim candlelight, no one could tell one girl from the other.

The next morning, Erebus learned the secret of the family vault by casting a *speak with dead* spell on the viscount's remains. He entered the vault to claim his newfound wealth, only to discover that even in death the Mistmoors had exacted their revenge on him. Entering the vault was one thing; being able to exit was another thing entirely. The portal he'd come through had closed behind him and refused to reopen.

Erebus's only hope of escape was the *plane shift* scroll he carried. Unfortunately for him, he miscast the spell because of its high level and ended up coming in contact with the Negative Material plane. His body was instantly destroyed, and his spirit was left to haunt the vault in the form of an ether shadow (see sidebar).

Unaware of what had become of Erebus, Regine was left alone in the manor. Surrounded by reminders of her grisly deeds, suffering from the loss of her "one real friend," and entering the pangs of yet another withdrawal, she crawled into a dark corner and plunged the knife into her own breast.

As Erebus was the instigator of the tragedy, it's his presence that binds the spirits of the three sisters to the material plane. Until Erebus is dead, his shadow will hang over Mistmoor, and the girls will remain trapped between life and death.

Haunting Encounters

Most of this adventure's combat action is covered by the geographic encounter key, but a second, roughly chronological encounter key is necessary to capture the feel of the haunted house and the personas of the ghosts. These encounters (set apart on pages 58-60) have been divided into four basic groups: an initial encounter triggered by the entry of the PCs into a certain room (noted in the text), and three other groups of encounters that follow more as a matter of chronology than as a reaction to the PCs' movements.

Each chronological grouping of encounters is listed under a certain time of night (evening, middle of the night, and wee hours of the morning) in the expectation that the PCs will spend only one night productively searching the manor. You might choose to change the three groupings to "First Night," "Second Night," and "Third Night" in order to draw the search out a bit, but unless the PCs are eating up a lot of time searching for secret doors, the players will probably get bored with this tactic.

Exactly when these encounters actually take place is of little importance. Use them at any point to liven up the adventure. You can even change the encounter order if it seems like a good idea at the time. The only rigid rule here is that—if at all possible—every encounter in a chronological group should be used before you start into the next group of encounters.

Many of these encounters take place in specific locations about the manor, and nearly all of them are expected to take place at night. This may seem a problem if the party is determined to hole up in one room and sleep the night away, but there are a number of ways to prod them into action.

First, Erebus won't let them sleep. His nightmares will haunt them from the moment they close their eyes. You can illustrate these nightmares in grand, imaginative detail or simply tell the players how their characters wake up screaming, shivering, and sweating

from a horrid dream only half remembered. You'll probably get the most out of the nightmare tactic is if you act like it's all part of the game. Pick one of the PCs, and give him a dream in which something happens to wake him up. Relate the dream to your players as if it were really happening to their characters. Don't make it anything too horrid at first—the more mundane the better, with maybe just a hint of spookiness to prod them into doing something (a racket elsewhere in the manor, perhaps, or a distant tapping that leads them to a secret stairway they hadn't found before because it exists only in the dream).

Then slowly start throwing unnerving oddities and inconsistencies at them. Ad lib. Take your cues from your players and build on any little haunting trick that unnerves them. Let their imaginations build their own nightmare. All the most awful of their voiced fears should come true, but twisted in some way that will come as a surprise and be even more horrible than imagined.

Then start killing PCs with grisly abandon. Not all at once, but one by one in the most horrid ways possible, each time holding out a slim ray of hope to the survivors until the dreamer himself wakes screaming from his fatal confrontation.

Have fun with this. Nightmare is the ultimate DM's holiday, where you're not only free of the worries of game and story consistency, you get to indulge in slaughtering an entire party of PCs without ruining anyone's day. And after all's said and done, if you narrated the dream like it was a good horror story and not a cheap slasher flick, the players should actually have enjoyed the experience.

Though you shouldn't play out more than one of these dreams (overused, this tactic quickly loses all entertainment value), the nightmares keep up all night if the PCs try to sleep.

A less dramatic method of getting the PCs moving and close to the crucial encounter areas is to remind the players of their characters' bodily functions, some of which it would probably be best to attend to outside. On the way out, the PCs will pass near or through many of the important rooms in the manor.

When all else fails, lure the party to the encounter spot. The appropriate ghost might be seen flitting through the halls ahead of the PCs, headed in the direction of the desired room. Reveri carries a candle, making her more visible. Rebecca's giggles are sure to attract attention. Regine often sings some child's song to herself ("Hush, little baby, don't say a word . . ."). And if the party doesn't investigate, let the PCs miss the encounter. That may mean they'll never find the vault, but that's what happens to adventurers who aren't adventurous.

Although it's not exactly a haunting, and no timetable exists for when it will rain or how hard, don't forget to make use of the weather during the course of the adventure. The rain's presence has been foreshadowed thoroughly in the introduction, so you can use it as a

Ether Shadow

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Any ruins or subterranean chambers
FREQUENCY: Very rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Night or darkness
DIET: Living beings
INTELLIGENCE: Highly
TREASURE: F
ALIGNMENT: Chaotic evil
NO. APPEARING: 1
ARMOR CLASS: 5
MOVEMENT: Fly 12 (A)
HIT DICE: 8+8
THAC0: 11
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-7 + special
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Strength drain
SPECIAL DEFENSES: +1 or better weapon to hit, spell immunities
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil
SIZE: M (6' tall)
MORALE: Special
XP VALUE: 3,000

Ether shadows, also known as greater shadows, are the progenitors of the more common shadows of monster fame. Like shadows, their chilling touch drains strength at the increased rate of two points per hit. Lost strength returns after 3-18 turns. A human or demihuman drained to zero strength or hit points by an ether shadow becomes a shadow of the type described in the *Monstrous Compendium*.

Ether shadows may travel freely through the Ethereal plane to manifest themselves as apparitions on any bordering plane. They have no power to materialize on those planes, so can neither physically affect nor be affected by anything on them. The one thing they can do is insinuate themselves into and control the dreams of any sleeper they discover—a power that lends credence to the notion that dreams are an other-planar experience. While an ether shadow may cause no actual harm to a dreamer, it can use this power to communicate freely, or more likely to plague the dreamer with nightmares of the worst caliber.

In order to combat an ether shadow, it's necessary to follow it to the Ethereal plane or to the plane on which it was originally created. On either plane, it is always partially materialized and may be affected by magical weapons and by all but a few spells. (Ether shadows are immune to *sleep*, *charm*, and *hold* spells, and all cold-based attacks.)

An ether shadow can change its body at will into any shape it desires, though that shape will always be made of the same shadow-stuff. It can also vary the exact shade of its substance and so may appear as the three-dimensional creature it is rather than a patch of darkness like ordinary shadows. Regardless, the ether shadow is always black or some shade of gray. If it chooses to remain its normal, featureless black, it is 90% undetectable in any light less bright than a *continual light* spell.

Ether shadows are created in a dark ritual that divides a creature's essence into three parts, causing it to exist simultaneously on the Ethereal plane, the Negative Material plane, and the Prime Material plane on which the ritual was performed.

It was Erebus's misfortune to duplicate the ritual with his miscast *planar travel* spell, scattering his essence to those very planes. Because of the special nature of the Mistmoor family vault, Erebus is no longer on the same aspect of the Prime Material plane that holds Mistmoor Manor. The PCs will never encounter him as more than an intangible apparition until the final confrontation. See "The Vault" for more information.

Erebus's two favorite forms are those of a raven and the man he was in life (a shadow of his former self, as it were). He rarely uses his shapeshifting abilities to assume any other form.

tool to keep the party from wandering away from the manor and (if you'll pardon the phrase) for atmospheric effect.

One last thing to remember about the hauntings: The three real ghosts are identical triplets, and Psyche has patterned her disguise after one of their portraits, so the party will find them visually indistinguishable from each other. The PCs' initial impression should be that they're seeing only one ghost—one who behaves very erratically.

Mistmoor Manor

The manor is a large two-story building of stout timber, with a stone tower built onto its northwest corner. The distance between ceiling and floor on each level is 15' (the dungeons have 10' ceilings). The manor grounds have gone long untended. The garden is surrounded by a stone fence 4½' high. Being one of the few spots of truly fertile ground in the area, it is overgrown, rampant with weeds and thorny brambles. The grass has grown to human waist height.

Ground Level

1. Foyer.

This entry room is empty and unfurnished except for a single tapestry hanging on the west wall. The wall-hanging depicts a dark-haired female warrior standing on a rocky outcropping. The banner she holds aloft sports a white pegasus rampant on a blue field. The room is thick with dust and cobwebs. Several sets of tracks lead to and from the outer door, the east doors, and the south passage.

The banner in the tapestry is that of the Mistmoor family. The tracks, like all those to be found in the manor, were left by Blaine's expedition.

2. Cloak Room. Several ancient traveling cloaks still hang on pegs along the walls of this small room, and a few moldering pairs of boots are piled in the corner.

3. Dining Hall.

You've entered a large chamber with a fireplace to the north. Two long wooden tables lined with chairs run the length of the room. There are several sets of tracks near the west entrance, and one set leading into the middle of the room, where it abruptly stops. The message Blaine saw on his first trip to the manor ("Soon, dear cousin, I come for you.") remains undisturbed in the dust.

Ancient bloodstains mar the tables.

The bloodstains were left by Regine's rampage.

Anyone curious enough to peer up the chimney of the fireplace is in for a nasty surprise: a group of huge centipedes nest there, between the first and second floor. They'll drop down and swarm over any creature that appears below them.

Centipedes, huge (9): INT non; AL N; AC 9; MV 21; HD 1/8; hp 1 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg nil; SA paralysis poison (+4 to saving throw, paralysis lasts 1-6 hours); SZ T; ML 6; XP 35; MC1. The centipedes make all saving throws at −2.

If anyone is disabled by the centipedes, Psyche will soon try to take

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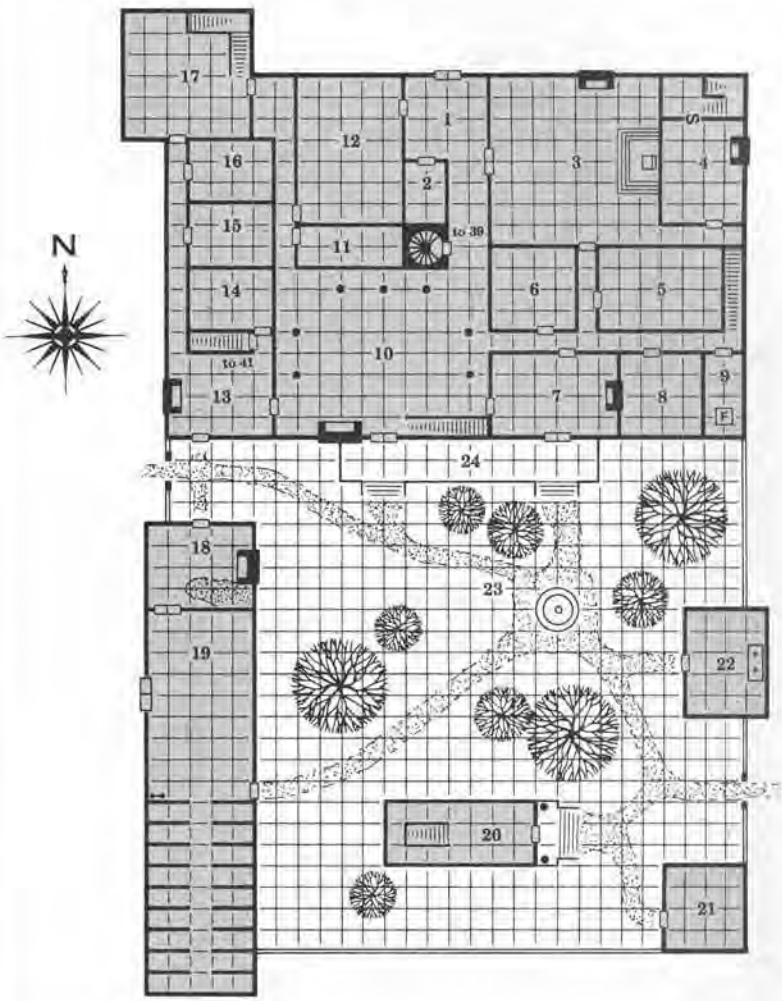
MISTMOOR MANOR
Ground Level

1 square = 5'



The Hauntings

Encounter 1. Looking Down From the Balcony

While the party is in the great hall (area 10), Psyche appears above, standing at the balcony railing at the west end of the gallery (area 38). She watches the PCs until they either call to her, start up toward her, or take some hostile action. If the PCs make any of these moves, she withdraws into the library (area 25), then into the tower (area 26), where she'll listen for anyone approaching before deciding whether to go up or down.

Psyche chose her position on the balcony very deliberately. The stairs are at the opposite end of the gallery, so she'll have plenty of time to get away from any nonmagical pursuit. Also, she's right next to the portrait of Regine described in area 38. The portrait can't be seen from below, but anyone coming up will probably notice its resemblance to the disguised Psyche.

Evening (Encounters 2-5)

Encounter 2. Spooking the Horses

If the party rode up to the manor, Psyche casts a *cantrip* from her ring to render herself scentless, then sneaks up to the horses and applies a drop of acid to each one's tether, so that the least pressure will break them free. She opens the doors if the horses are being kept in the stable.

Psyche then splashes oil on the ground in front of the horses, lights a crude torch of dried grasses, and throws it on the oil. As soon as the horses bolt (not even a war horse should be sanguine about flames suddenly leaping up in front of it), she douses the fire with a blanket she dampened in the fountain. She then uses the *cantrip* already cast to cover the scorched earth with loose dirt, crop burned patches of grass to look like they were nibbled at by the horses, etc. (a single casting of the *cantrip* spell can produce multiple effects as necessary). Psyche then retreats hastily so she can be gone before the party arrives to investigate the sounds of the panicked horses.

If any of the party members have been disabled (as by the centipedes in area 3), Psyche abducts them during the confusion if they've been left alone. She immediately takes abducted PCs to area 40 and imprisons them there.

Encounter 3. Light in the Library

From out in the garden, the party sees a light in the library window (area 25). If they go inside to investigate, they find a candle burning there beside an incomplete book of Reveri's poetry, open to one of the last pages. On that page is a half-written poem—the ink still fresh—entitled "Thrice Cursed," which seems to be about the Mistmoor family, though not enough of it has been finished to tell any more.

A quill and an inkwell are beside the book on the table. Anyone who bothers to check will notice that the handwriting of this new poem is identical to the others in the book.

If the PCs' approach to the library was absolutely silent (using a *levitate* or *fly* spell to peer in through the window, or a thief approaching the door with a successful *move silently* roll), Reveri can be caught in the act of actually doing the writing, though she'll bolt the moment she becomes aware of the intrusion, not hesitating to pass through walls, floors, or closed doors on her way out.

Encounter 4. In the Sitting Room

Regine is curled up in a chair in a corner of area 7, with Erebus in the form of a raven perched on her shoulder. Her stare is glassy eyed, and nothing the party can say or do will get her attention. Erebus is another matter. He stares at the PCs balefully and, if they approach, launches himself at them, his form expanding into a great black shadow that takes up their entire field of vision. The raven-shadow passes right through them and out through the wall, his touch chilling but harmless. Regine will have vanished.

If the PCs leave without rousing Erebus, both girl and raven are gone before they return, even if it is only seconds later.

Encounter 5. Dancing

The party happens upon Rebecca as she is waltzing about the great hall (area 10) to music only she can hear. The moment she sees the group, she picks out the most charismatic human, half-elven, or elven male, her fantasy-clouded mind seeing him as the man she loved in life. Thereafter, she flirts with him whenever they meet, always calling him "Tommy" or "Tom." If the PC says that isn't his name, she ignore his words. If he does so repeatedly or refuses her attention, she becomes quite cross and leaves through the nearest wall. By the time she next encounters her chosen PC, she will have forgotten that the event ever happened and will treat the PC in the same way as before. Rebecca totally ignores everyone but "Tommy."

If "Tommy" should ever mistakenly call her Reveri or Regine, she repays the insult with a withering glare but otherwise does nothing to correct his misconception (of course Tommy knows her name!).

On this first meeting, Rebecca admonishes Tommy cheerfully for being so late to the dance and insists that he join her immediately. Dancing with her will be difficult, as she remains completely intangible, but unless he tries, she takes offense and leaves. If the PC joins her in her dance, she remains for several minutes and is willing to talk, so long as the conversation has nothing to do with herself, her sisters, or anyone's death. Touching on any such painful subjects will make her clam up immediately ("You talk too much. Let's just dance.")

If "Tommy" plays along with Rebecca's fantasies until the dance ends, she whispers in his ear, "Meet me in the loft at midnight," then leaves him with an intangible kiss.

Middle of the Night (Encounters 6-9)

Encounter 6. The Scream

Psyche lets out her best blood-curdling scream from somewhere nearby and leaves a freshly bloodied dagger on the floor to be found by anyone who investigates. The "blood" on the dagger is fake, from the supply of berry juice that Psyche carries.

After this encounter, Psyche will start running into the real ghosts, and her hauntings will cease while she and Broc retreat to area 40 to rethink their plans. Two or three hours before dawn, still uncertain what to make of this new development (is it real ghosts or the party of adventurers turning the tables on them?), they begin catnapping in shifts to try to catch up on their sleep, but not very successfully. Erebus haunts their dreams as persistently as he haunts those of the PCs.

Encounter 7. At the Fountain

Regine is in the garden, sitting on the edge of the fountain (area 23), trying to scrub blood from her hands. Not only are her hands greatly bloodied, but so are her arms and the sleeves of her dress, which she has rolled up to her elbows. Blood speckles her face and the front of her dress as well.

She acknowledges the party's approach but will not converse with them other than to comment, "It won't come off," as she wrings her hands, repeatedly dipping them in the water and rubbing at them as if trying to scrape off something alive. "It just won't come off." If the party doesn't break off the encounter themselves, she repeats her lament as an anguished shout and runs crying into the house. She is up the steps and through the doors to the sitting room (area 7) almost before the party can react, and will have vanished by the time they arrive.

Encounter 8. The Note

This encounter should not take place until the party has gained Reveri's trust, probably by doing one or both of the favors described in areas 25 and 26.

Reveri leaves a note for the party on a sheet of parchment in the library (area 25), thanking them for what they've done. "If I can return the favor in any way, you've but to ask." She lights a candle again, this time to deliberately attract the PCs' attention. She will read and reply to any note the party leaves for her here. If the PCs express an interest in talking to her, she promises to meet with them shortly before dawn on the tower roof (see area 26).

Encounter 9. In the Loft

If Rebecca has promised to meet "Tommy" in the stable loft (area 19) at midnight, she'll keep the appointment punctually. Anyone who is there waiting sees her slip in through the garden door and climb the ladder. If Rebecca arrives first, or if she didn't actually make an appointment with "Tommy," she is already be in the loft. When "Tommy" enters, she giggles happily and calls to him, urging him to join her.

If the spiders that live in the loft have not been dealt with, they are still here, as oblivious to Rebecca's presence as she is to theirs. If they attack "Tommy," however, Becky momentarily snaps back to reality and strikes out at the creatures ruthlessly. Any spider dies instantly from the aging effect of her touch.

By doing so, however, she leaves herself partially vulnerable to attacks. If anyone strikes out and wounds her during this time (perhaps thinking she had something to do with the spiders' attack), she flees as soon as "Tommy" is safe and will never reappear to the party. They will have lost a valuable ally.

If Rebecca is unhindered while she defeats the spiders, she forgets the combat ever happened the moment it is over, and again urges "Tommy" to join her in the loft. If he refuses her entreaties, she eventually heads for her room (area 29) to mope over his rejection. If she is discovered there, she will treat "Tommy" just as if he had joined her in the loft. Encounter 11 will not take place until after Rebecca gets the chance to play out the rest of her rendezvous.

If and when "Tommy" joins her, she immediately tries to hold him and kiss him, only to find it impossible with an ethereal body. (Partial solidity may be okay for striking out and for manipulating objects, but it's no good for cuddling.) After several foiled attempts, Rebecca becomes frustrated enough to let her ghostly instincts take over. She attempts to use her *magic jar* ability on any compatible female in the party, leaving the loft to seek out such a person if necessary. If there is no such woman available, or if the *magic jar* attempt fails, Becky crawls off into the

nearest corner and sobs pitifully. She responds to anyone who approaches her with, "Just go away," and disappears through the wall if her command is ignored.

If the *magic jar* succeeds, Becky resumes her attempts to hug and kiss "Tommy," and now has the body to do it. Rebecca's possession of the female character should be a very obvious one. Because the spell is a transfer of spirits, and Becky is nothing more than a spirit, she disappears entirely the moment she takes over the target body. Even if no one notices that the ghost has suddenly disappeared, Rebecca's speech and mannerisms are remarkably different from those of the body's original "owner." As she continues to call "Tommy" by name, the PCs should be left in no doubt that something has happened to their female companion.

If "Tommy" accepts Becky's advances and no one in the party sees anything morally wrong with the situation, Blaine interposes himself bodily between Becky and "Tommy." He gives both of them a good chewing out in an effort to get them to see the grave error they are about to make. If Blaine is not present (and there are no other characters of conscience), Rebecca realizes what she's doing when she notices physical oddities about "her" body: hair that's the wrong color or been cropped short for a rough-and-tumble lifestyle, hands less than perfectly soft and smooth from the work of adventuring, or whatever else is appropriate. These inconsistencies lead to the conclusions that the body she's in is not her own, bringing her delusions crashing down.

No matter who or what forces Rebecca to face the reality of what she's done, she is so shocked that she vacates her victim's body and flees to be alone and come to terms with herself.

Wee Hours of the Morning (Encounters 10-12)

Encounter 10. The Dragon

This encounter takes place in the trophy room (area 39), where Regine is sitting between the front claws of the stuffed dragon trophy, playing with a pile of coins and small jewels by picking up handfuls of the stuff and letting it fall through her fingers. Erebus, in raven form, is perched on the neck of the dragon.

Regine acknowledges the party with a hello but ignores the PCs after that. If they pester her or Erebus, she childishly pouts, "Go 'way. I'm doin' stuff." If they don't leave immediately, the dragon trophy (which acts as a zombie, detailed in area 39) animates and attacks.

During the confusion of the battle, both girl and raven vanish.

Encounter 11. Penitent and Sober

One way or another, sanity returns to Rebecca, and she seeks out the party to apologize for behaving so foolishly. If the PCs meet her with hostility, she flees to her room (area 29), where she can be found brooding for the rest of the adventure. If she is sought out and approached in a friendly manner there, she continues as she had originally intended to in this encounter.

Becky now recognizes that the male PC to whom she made advances is not Tommy, and that any attempts she makes to cling to life will be at someone else's expense. She's desperately ready to move on into death, and she wants the party to help her.

An evil presence binds her to this plane. She knows Regine's raven is somehow a part of that evil, but nothing more. She will help the party find the vault in return for the promise that they will do everything in their power to free her from her curse.

Becky knows about the entrance to the vault but doesn't know the command to open it. Only her father knew. She can tell the PCs that the skull in Regine's room is that of her father but won't think to mention this unless the party asks about such things. She still refuses to dwell on the tragedy of her family's death but willingly clears up any confusion the party may have regarding herself and her sisters (they are dealing with triplets, not a single ghost). She does not, at this point, know anything about Psyche or Broc, as their presence never registered while she was lost in her fantasies.

If the party shows any doubts about how to proceed, Becky suggests that the party talk with Reveri, as her sister is better at intellectual riddles. If they haven't already arranged a meeting with Reveri via notes, Becky volunteers to talk her into such a meeting.

Encounter 12. Stargazing

If the party has done anything to gain Reveri's trust, she can be found stargazing on the roof of the tower (see area 26) during the last hour before dawn and will not withdraw unless treated hostilely. She, like her sister Rebecca, wishes to move on into death. Though her torture is not as great, she feels the stagnation of undeath wearing on her soul, and she knows that the evil that binds her here is the one that destroyed her family.

Reveri never entirely understood the events surrounding the massacre, but she is certain beyond all doubt that Erebus, Regine's precious pet, was the source of her sister's insanity, and that Erebus's evil still lingers. She also believes that Erebus's life force was somehow trapped in the vault, and that's why it has never left.

Reveri knows nothing of where or how to enter the vault and does not know where her father's remains can be found. However, she was an occasional pupil of her Aunt Jocasta and picked up some small understanding of magic. She knows about the potions of *arcane comprehension* that her aunt used. If she learns that the party may have use for such a potion, she suggests that some might still be found in the manor. She also knows about the secret cache in area 22, the chapel (she discovered it while nosing about as a child) and knows that it used to contain "some magical things that might be helpful," but doesn't recall anything more specific.

Continued from page 57

advantage of the situation, as described in encounter 2 of "The Hauntings."

4. Audience Chamber.

A long table and several comfortable chairs furnish this room. A bookshelf lines the north wall.

The viscount used this room to conduct private audiences. Most of the books are innocuous, uninteresting, and without value to anyone but a historian. To open the secret door in the north wall from this side, a specific book must be pulled out from the shelf. There is a 5% chance that random examination of books will accidentally trigger the door, or it may be discovered normally by a search for secret doors. It will open freely to any pressure from the other side.

5. Bath.

Most of this room is taken up by a large (10′ × 15′) sunken bath full of foul, murky water.

After the slaughter, Regine dumped the bodies of the dead servants here. Their remains lie at the bottom of the 3′-deep tub. Before he himself died, Erebus animated the former servants as zombies (they've since devolved into skeletons) out of sheer malice. They were left without instructions while the spirits of the manor lay dormant, and so did nothing when Psyche and Broc came to search the room. Now Erebus has ordered them to attack any creature that comes within arm's reach of the pool.

Skeletons (15): INT non; AL N; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 3 each; THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg special; SA +2 to surprise opponents; SD half damage from edged or piercing weapons; MR special; SZ M; ML special; XP 65; MC1.

The skeletons fight by overbearing their opponents, dragging them under the water to drown. They divide themselves as evenly as possible to attack any living thing in or beside the pool. A DM unused to the overbearing rules (*Player's Handbook*, page 98; *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 60) or the rules concerning holding one's breath (*PH*, page 122) should review these pages before using this adventure in order to run this encounter as smoothly as possible.

6. Nursery.

Two cribs, a few tiny chairs, and an open toy chest furnish the room. The floor is covered with a scattering of toys. Ancient, bloody handprints cover the walls.

The handprints are from the massacre. A doll is lying decapitated in one of the cribs. The toy chest contains a bag of 15 gemstone marbles (worth 10 gp each) that Psyche has overlooked.

7. Sitting Room.

This room is comfortably furnished with stuffed chairs and couches, low tables, and a few bookshelves.

None of the books on the shelves are of any interest, but one of the tables holds an open book of Reveri's poetry. Of the two poems visible on the open pages, the first is an elegy for her mother, who died in childbirth. The second poem describes the joy Reveri took in her writing. One particular passage has been underlined: "This ink that flows from pen/To word/Is as surely my life/As the blood that flows within."

8. Storeroom.

Filled almost to overflowing with boxes and crates of musty miscellany, this room is obviously a storehouse for nonperishable junk of all sorts.

There is nothing of value here that Psyche or someone before her hasn't removed, but any item from the "Clothing" or "Miscellaneous Equipment" lists in the *PH* (page 66-68) that is valued at 25 gp or less might well be found (DM's discretion, or 50% chance of 1-4 items of that type). Any search for such things is sure to take at least three full turns.

9. Privy.

This small room is completely bare and featureless, save for a single book lying forgotten in the dust.

The book, which lies beside the south wall, is a mariner's chronicle. A bookmark in it marks the description of a funeral at sea, and an underlined passage reads, " . . . and so he slipped into that watery grave, nevermore to rise."

This room used to be the privy, and though the fixtures have been removed, the hole still exists. It's been covered with a piece of canvas about the same color as the floor, and the whole surface has been covered with dust using the *cantrip* spell from Psyche's ring. The canvas won't be spotted unless the floor is examined very carefully. Anyone approaching the book directly (that is, not staying very close to the east or west wall) will step on the canvas and fall into the hole.

This trap particularly devious because a second piece of canvas has been stretched across the hole a few feet below the first, and Psyche has laid out a *portable hole* on it. Anyone falling into the privy lands in the *portable hole* (which has been filled with water to 8′ of its 10′ depth).

Broc immediately yanks the whole business out into the crawlspace below the house through the slit where they've cleared the mortar away from the brickwork walls of the privy hole (see diagram). He folds up the hole and rushes with it (so whoever's inside won't run out of air) to area 40. There he opens the *hole* out on the floor of a cell, then hurries out and locks the door.

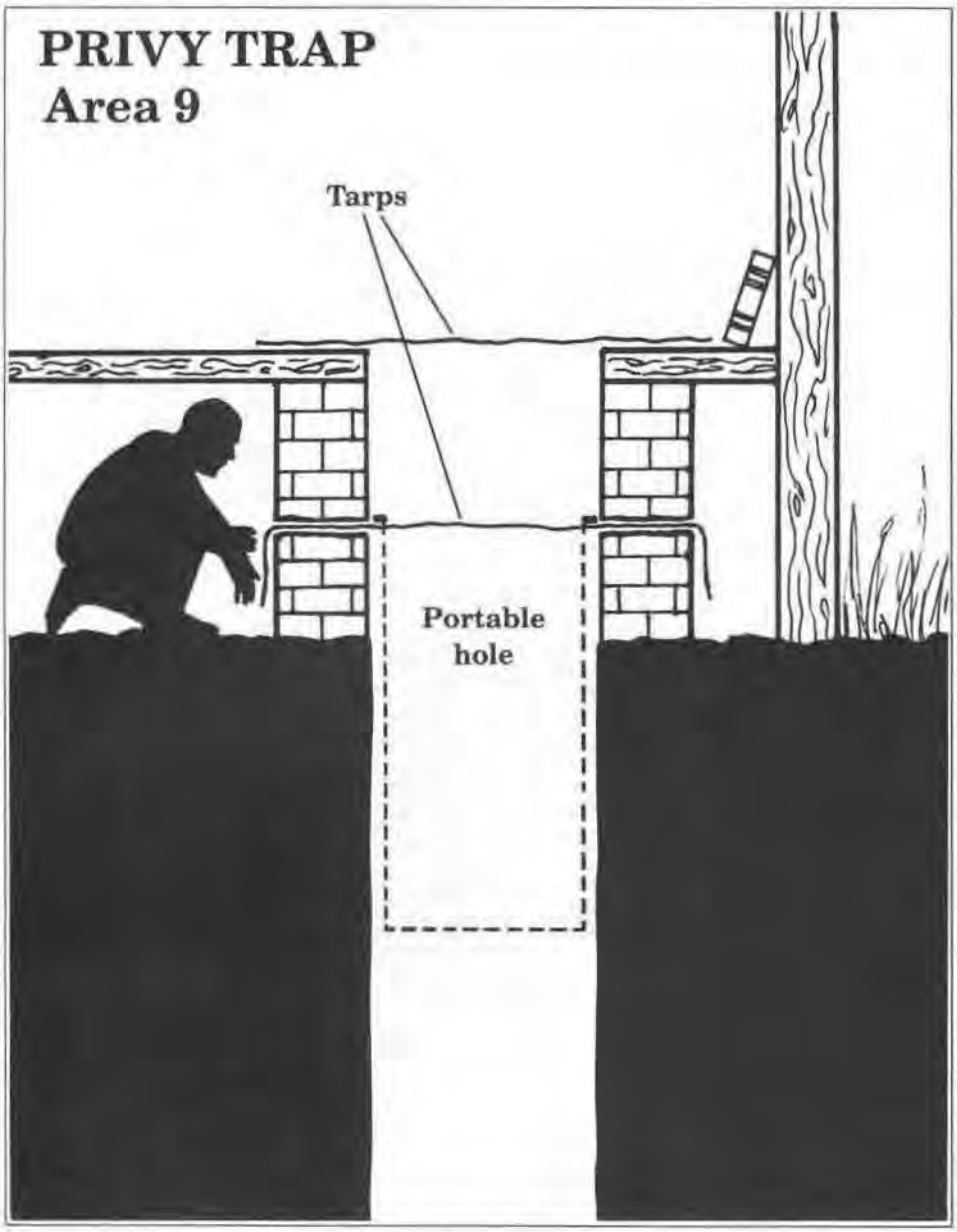
As soon as the disoriented victim crawls out of the water—which should be possible without help for just about anyone who doesn't panic, excepting a dwarf or halfling in full plate—Broc grabs the edge of the *portable hole* and pulls it out through the bars before hurrying back to the crawlspace.

The victim's companions should believe he has dropped into the long-clean water of the real privy hole, 50′ below—and isn't surfacing.

The thieves have gone to all this trouble because they believe that a clean disappearance will have a more horrific effect, and because anyone simply falling into the privy could be rescued by his companions. Also, they don't want to take a chance on someone actually dying from their trap. As has already been pointed out, they're thieves, not murderers.

10. Great Hall.

This large, sparsely furnished chamber has a high ceiling and a balcony running around the inner walls, 15′ up. Footprints lead back and forth between the wide northeast corridor and the stairs along the south wall. A large portrait of the first viscount of Mistmoor hangs over the fireplace.



While there is nothing much of interest here, the hauntings begin the first time the party enters this room. Refer to "The Hauntings," Encounter 1 (page 58) for details.

11. Armory. Filled with empty and broken weapons racks, this room was looted by thieves long ago.

12. Barracks.

This room is furnished with several sets of bunk beds, footlockers, a few chairs, and a table.

The footlockers are mostly broken open and all empty. There is nothing of value or interest here.

13. Kitchen.

The room is cluttered with typical grimy cooking paraphernalia and furnished with counters and cupboards, a small table, and two chairs.

The half-dozen rats that nest in the cupboards will scurry away if the doors are opened.

Rats (6): INT animal; AL N; AC 7; MV 15; HD ¼; hp 1 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1; SA disease; SZ T; ML 2; XP 7; MC1.

14. Pantry. The room is lined with shelves and filled with empty food containers: sacks that have been gnawed open, toppled barrels, and the like.

15. Servants' Quarters (Female).

This small bedroom is furnished with a single wardrobe and bunks for six people.

The wardrobe is filled with clothing for women and girls of several different sizes.

16. Servants' Quarters (Male). This room is the same as area 15, except that the clothing is for men and boys.

17. The Tower. The bottom floor of this stone tower is unfurnished and empty.

18. Smithy. There is a gaping hole in the roof here, where a limb from the tree outside fell through. This room is clearly marked as a smithy by the rusting and weathered apparatus about the place.

19. Carriage House and Stable.

The south end of this long, dirt-floored room is divided into stalls. An old carriage sits in the middle of the north end, gathering dust. A ladder leads up to the loft above the stalls.

Three huge spiders have taken up residence in the loft. They wait until someone starts up the ladder, then leap out to attack.

Spiders, huge (3): INT animal; AL N; AC 6; MV 18; HD 2+2; hp 10, 9 (×2); THAC0 19; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA poison (save at +1); SZ M; ML 8; XP 270; MC1.

There were once five spiders here, but Psyche and Broc fought and killed two of them. The three now in the loft were out hunting at the time. The corpses of the other two spiders can be found in the back of the loft.

20. Mausoleum.

The architecture of this stone tomb is disturbingly gothic. The outside is ornately carved and decorated with gargoyles. The door is made of iron.

The lock on the door is broken. The interior of the tomb is bare, save for a few broken and scattered human bones—the remains of a maidservant whom Regine locked in here the night of the massacre and left to die, clawing at the door. Her bones were scattered generations ago when the door was forced open by treasure-seekers.

The first time the party enters the mausoleum, Broc comes out from his hiding place under the house and bars the door by lodging an iron bar across it behind the heads of two gargoyles. If the PCs don't manage to get out on their own before morning, Broc or Psyche will unbar the door precisely at dawn.

21. Garden Shed.

This small wooden building is filled with equipment once used to tend the manor grounds: shovels, ropes, ladders, picks, blades for trimming the lawn and pruning shrubbery, etc.

The shed isn't weatherproof, and all the equipment is suffering badly from the ravages of time.

22. Chapel.

The outside of this stone chapel is almost completely covered with climbing ivy. Even the door is barely visible beneath the vines.

Any inspection of the door area reveals that several of the vines have been severed recently so that the door could be opened.

Inside is a small altar, still draped with an altar cloth and with a tarnished candelabra at either end.

A secret compartment in the side of the altar contains a priest scroll with *find the path, regeneration,* and *speak with dead,* all inscribed at the 21st level of magic use. Note that a *find the path* spell cannot lead PCs to the vault (see "The Vault" for details).

23. Fountain. This decorative marble fountain, which no longer functions, is filled with brackish water.

24. Back Porch. This open wooden deck stands 2½' above the ground level of the garden.

It will not be immediately obvious, as the grass in the garden has grown so high, but the lower sides of the platform are not walled in, making it possible to crawl back under the porch, and from there into the crawlspace that lies under the house itself. With the exception of stairwells, the brick-walled privy hole (see area 9), the sunken bath in area 5, and the area under the tower (area 17), this 1'- to 3'-high crawlspace runs under the entire house. Various stone supports bear the weight of the manor floor.

This is Broc's hiding place. If anyone comes poking around in the crawlspace, he freezes wherever he is and trusts he will be overlooked due to his *cloak of elvenkind,* the extent of the crawlspace, and the difficulty most people will have in searching it.

There is a trapdoor in the ground, just north of the fireplace in area 7 above, that leads to area 40. Broc is careful to kick dirt over the trapdoor after he comes back up, in order to keep it concealed.

Upper Level

25. Library.

This room is lined with bookshelves and furnished with chairs, a table, and a couple of writing desks, all concentrated about the fireplace to the south. The large bay window in the south wall was designed to let a maximum of sunlight into the room.

While none of the books are immediately useful, any examination of them shows that there's something seriously wrong. A large number of the books are little more than covers and leather bindings, as if someone had systematically torn out their pages.

The real culprit is a bookworm that Psyche unwittingly carried here in her pack. It's in no need of new food supplies, so it will not attack spell books or stow away in anyone's pack, but unless the adventurers stop it, the library is doomed. This may not mean much to the average barbarian warrior, but it means everything to Reveri—especially since this is where the bulk of her life's work is kept. Anyone who destroys the bookworm will have her undying (well, undead) gratitude.

Bookworm: INT non; AL N; AC 2; MV 12, burrow 3; HD ¼; hp 2; THAC0 20; #AT nil; Dmg nil; SA consumes scrolls and spell books at one level per round; SZ T; ML special; XP 15; MC1.

The bookworm can easily be traced by the sound of its munching (automatic success if the party is listening for it, otherwise each PC has a chance of hearing it equal to his hear-noise percentage each round spent searching through the shelves). When discovered, the bookworm is feeding and motionless, so its effective armor class is 9. If attacked, it immediately leaps away and scurries off to another bookshelf, where it will have to be tracked down again.

26. Laboratory.

This level of the tower was obviously used as an alchemical laboratory, but all the glassware has been shattered and the worktables are broken and burned. The stone walls have been blackened by some sort of explosion. A human skeleton in the remains of a mage's robe is slumped against the wall in the northwest corner of the room.

The stairway leads up to the battlemented roof of the tower, 20' above the main roof of the manor.

The mage, Jocasta, was a sister of the viscount and a substitute mother for the girls, whose own mother died in childbirth. Jocasta died while the rest of the family was being massacred, in an explosion caused by mixing alchemical components that Regine had maliciously mislabeled. Giving her remains a decent burial would win the gratitude of both Reveri and Rebecca.

27. Reveri's Room.

This was obviously a woman's bedroom. In addition to the standard bedroom furnishings, the room contains a writing desk and several bookshelves.

Several of the books are Reveri's own poetry. One shelf is devoted entirely to her diaries and private musings in prose. An incomplete volume of poetry is on the writing desk. Reverie was working on this book just before her death.

Nothing can be garnered from a brief perusal of the diaries, but anyone willing to sit down and read for several hours will be able to learn a few noteworthy things about Reveri and her family:

Reveri, a daughter of the viscount, had two sisters and at least two brothers. When Reveri was 13, her mother died while giving birth to one of those brothers. After that, she grew very close to her Aunt Jocasta—a mage of some

sort—who became a second mother to the girls. Reveri was also very close to her sisters, Regine and Becky.

Reveri envied Becky's outgoing personality, and even more envied the male attention it got her. Still, it's obvious that the two were fast friends. Reveri wished she could get closer to her other sister, but there was something detached and distant about Regine. She could seem bright and cheerful and perfectly normal when she wanted to, but most of her time was spent as if walking around in a fog. After their mother died, things only got worse.

For her 15th birthday, Regine was presented with a raven as a pet. Reveri took an instant dislike to the thing, but Regine seemed quite taken with it and would never be separated from it, though no one could remember exactly who gave it to her. Reveri never trusted the bird and repeatedly describes it in her writings as "hateful," with "eyes that burn with an evil intelligence."

28. Regine's Room.

The walls of this bedroom are completely undecorated, the furnishings simple and functional. Only the bird perch beside the window and the dresses in the open wardrobe testify that this room was actually lived in. A human skull sits on the otherwise empty vanity, as if staring at its own reflection in the blood-streaked mirror.

The skull is that of the viscount, the girls' father, the only part of his remains that hasn't been lost or destroyed. It sits here undisturbed where Regine brought it in her lunacy, to hold an imagined conversation with it shortly before she killed herself.

29. Rebecca's Room.

This woman's bedroom is well furnished and lavishly decorated. There are footprints in the dust and a message in dried blood on the wall: "I shall not rest 'ere all my kin rest with me."

The small collection of crystal perfume bottles on the vanity could be sold for a total of 20 gp. A silver, heart-shaped locket (50 gp value) hangs on the frame of the vanity mirror. The locket contains a portrait of a handsome young man (Tommy, Rebecca's beau).

The message was left by Psyche, written in fake blood.

Rebecca was killed here, and Regine dumped the body out the window into the stormy night so no one would find it and realize that she was impersonating her sister. Consequently, Rebecca's body was left where it could be seen by anyone approaching the manor. It was discovered by the first expedition to return there. She was given a decent burial at the village cemetery.

30. Guest Room. This bedroom, simply but well furnished, was left in good order, with no personal effects of any sort to distinguish it.

31. Bedroom.

This man's bedroom is very well furnished. A shield bearing the family coat of arms (the pegasus rampant) lies on the bed, defaced with the crude blood drawing of some sort of bird.

The wardrobe is filled with once-fine clothing that the effects of time have rendered valueless.

Stored in a chest at the foot of the bed are a dagger, a horseman's flail, a long sword of the very finest steel and craftsmanship (+1 on attack rolls and +1 to damage, although it is in no way magical), a full helm, and a suit of man-sized elven chain mail, all in excellent condition. Psyche found these items, but as their value wasn't immediately obvious to her, impatiently passed them over.

The room belonged to the oldest son of the viscount. The blood drawing on the shield is Regine's handiwork and dates back to the night of her rampage.

32. Viscount's Room.

This is a richly furnished bedroom with a large, comfortable bed. A portrait of a beautiful, dark-haired

woman of about 30 hangs over the fireplace. A giant-sized shield displaying the pegasus rampant dominates the west wall.

The clothing and personal effects about the place obviously belonged to a man.

The portrait is that of the viscount's wife, and anyone who has seen the portrait of Regine in area 38 or encountered any of the ghosts can immediately notice the family resemblance. Behind the portrait is a magical mirror that serves both as guardian of and entrance to the vault of the Mistmoors. Unless the command word "Medusa" is spoken before the mirror is viewed, it will function exactly as a *mirror of opposition*. If the command word is spoken, however, the interior of the vault appears on the mirror's surface in lieu of a reflection, and it may be used as a portal to step directly into the vault. The portal remains open for one full turn, after which the mirror reverts to normal. Only the word "Perseus" will reactivate the portal from the other side.

The dead viscount is the only one who knows the command words for the vault. The only reasonable chance the party has of finding its way in is by using the scroll of *speak with dead* from the chapel (area 22). No lower-level usage of this spell could speak with one so long dead. The PCs may also need the help of the potion of *arcane comprehension* (from area 36) to talk with the viscount's skull (which can be found in area 28). Unless the party specifically asks the viscount about how to leave the vault, he won't tell them the second command word. This will probably leave the party trapped in the vault, but it won't mean their doom, so long as they've cultivated friends on the outside.

If Rebecca or Reveri is present when the party questions their father's spirit, the girl will have learned the entry command word. When Erebus dies, she feels the sudden absence of his evil presence. If the party fails to return soon after, the girl will reopen the portal to find out what happened. Also, if Psyche is still operating independently, she'll know the password (she was listening at the door either during the conversation with the dead viscount or when the PCs actually used the password), and will eventually use it herself to investigate.

The mirror seems to be attached firmly to the wall, but it would be more truthful to say that it's fixed immovably to that point in space. Even if the whole manor were torn down around it, the mirror would remain hanging in the air right where it is now. No power short of a *wish* can budge the mirror, and nothing short of divine power can destroy it, because the mirror is essentially a part of the vault and the vault is a magical relic (see "The Vault" for details).

33. The Study.

This room is furnished with a comfortable chair, a cluttered writing desk, and several bookshelves. A tapestry on the wall depicts a mighty citadel perched on a crag.

The books on the shelves include texts on history and battle tactics, as well as a broad but basic range of literary and philosophical works. The papers on the desk are a year's worth of 200-year-old economic records for the viscounty that detail transactions of tens of thousands of gold pieces at a time. An ancient map mounted on the wall above the desk depicts the Viscounty of Mistmoor as it was 200 years ago, including much area that has since been annexed into the holdings of other nobles. Hanging next to the map is a framed page on which a childishly cute and unrefined rhyme about a cat named "Tinkerpaws" has been scrawled and smudged in an equally childish hand. It's been signed by Reveri, though the handwriting bears little resemblance to the elegant script she went on to develop.

34. Bedroom.

This woman's bedroom was left primly arranged, though it still shows signs of having been lived in. A half-woven tapestry of a handsome young warrior bearing the shield of the Mistmoors sits in one corner.

The room belonged to the girls' grandmother—the mother of the viscount's wife. She was a skilled midwife who felt a calling to help all those who needed her. She knew the secret of the vault but was delivering a baby in the village on the night of the massacre. Her reprieve, however, was short lived. She died within the month from shock and grief, and is buried in a long-forgotten grave.

35. Guest Room. This room appears exactly as area 30.

36. Bedroom.

Although this was obviously once a woman's bedroom, the bed itself is conspicuously absent. The remaining furnishings are sparse but comfortable. The walls are hung with star charts.

Anything more than a cursory examination of the woman's personal effects reveals that she was probably a mage. This was the bedroom of Jocasta, the mage whose skeleton may be found in area 26, the tower laboratory.

The bed was taken to area 40 by Psyche and Broc for their personal use, though of course Psyche has dusted over the evidence that the move was recent with the use of a *cantrip* spell.

Reveri was killed here, where she attempted to hide from her sister. Her skeleton can still be found in the wardrobe. Psyche and Broc eventually discovered and examined this skeleton, but they chose not to disturb it, reasoning that a good skeleton in the closet couldn't hurt their haunting efforts.

A secret compartment in the back of the wardrobe contains a small box. Inside the box are two potions of *healing*, an *elixir of health*, two potions of *arcane comprehension* (see sidebar) and a gem (a blue jasper worth 50 gp) engraved with a picture of a serpent. The gem is actually a *periapt of proof against poison +2*.

Potion of *Arcane Comprehension*

The formula for this magical draught was developed by the alchemist-mage Jocasta to facilitate the organization of her spell library. It grants the imbiber the ability to *read magic* for as long as the potion lasts, but more important, it enhances a spell-caster's comprehension of all written spells. This allows him to cast spells from scrolls (or books) or scribe them into his spell book without fear of failure due to the level of the spell. This will not, however, allow the user to cast spells not appropriate to his class.

A typical single-draught vial of this potion will last for 3-30 hours.

37. Upstairs Storage. Though slightly less cluttered, due to its larger size, this room otherwise conforms in all respects to area 8.

38. Gallery.

> The walls of this balcony are lined with portraits of Mistmoor family members. Nearly all are stained with ancient spatters of blood. Three sets of footprints lead from the stairway out the north passage. They also return the same way.
>
> Toward the south end of the west wall is a portrait of a very pretty, dark-haired teenage girl with a raven perched on her shoulder. The portraits to each side of this one have been shredded beyond recognition, as if by the claws of some wild animal.

The plaque on the frame of the intact portrait labels it "Regine." The shredded portraits were of Rebecca and Reveri, and the plaques on the frames identify them that way. Regine was responsible for slashing and tearing the portraits to ribbons with her dagger.

The tracks lead up the hall to area 29.

Dungeon Level

39. Trophy Room.

> As you open the door, you are greeted by the sight of an enormous black dragon coiled upon a mound of treasure, its head reared back and its mouth thrown open in the classic pose that has been the last sight of too many adventurers.

The dragon isn't alive, but combat reflexes shouldn't give the party time to realize that before they've reacted to its presence. The dragon is a stuffed trophy, a beast that plagued the Mistmoor area hundreds of years ago.

The dragon has actually been reanimated as a zombielike creature, but the only clue to this will be that the thing radiates magic. The last order it received was to stay stone still and pretend to be inanimate. It will take damage from any attacks the party throws at it, and an additional 10 hp if they cut open its hide to search through the stuffing, but will bear it all without flinching.

Dragon "zombie": INT non; AL N; AC 0; MV 12; HD 14; hp 65; THAC0 7; #AT 1 (no longer coordinated enough for multiple attacks); Dmg 3d6+5; ML special; XP 7,000; MC (modified; see "Dragon, black" and "Zombie").

While he was still alive, Erebus animated the dragon with a unique spell of his own design to help with the slaughter (it killed the servants whose skeletons can be found in area 5). The dragon reveals its animated nature and attacks the PCs only as a result of encounter 10 from "The Hauntings" (see page 60.)

The mound of treasure on which the dragon was mostly copper, even when the trophy was first erected, and any more valuable metals have since been stolen. The hoard also contains a large number of weapons, pieces of armor, and bits of jewelry as well, but none of it is magical and all of it is of poor quality. The jewelry is made from base metals, glass gems, and metallic paints. The entire horde is worth about 300 gp.

Originally, this room was built as a torture chamber, but succeeding generations of Mistmoors found less and less stomach for the cruel machinery of the place. Eventually, one viscount carted it out altogether to make room for his trophy.

40. Prison.

> Several barred cells are recessed into the walls of this room, and a ladder of iron rungs on the north wall leads up and out. The room itself is comfortably appointed with a hodgepodge of furnishings obviously scavenged from the rest of the house, including a rather nice bed.
>
> A young man is asleep on a pallet in the cell north of the door. A chess set has been set up on a small table just outside the cell, the pieces left in mid-game.

The ladder leads up to a concealed trapdoor that opens into the crawlspace under the house (see area 24).

The man in the cell is Joshua, a local huntsman and the man who vanished from Blaine's expedition. He was standing in the foyer when he heard a noise and went to investigate. He found Psyche (dressed as the ghost) in the throne room. When she withdrew toward the audience chamber in seeming timidity, he followed her, only to fall into her *portable hole* (now set up in area 9), which was concealed under a rug. He's been held here ever since. Psyche and Broc intend to release him once they've found and carted off the treasure, but he knows too much about their hoax for them to set him free any sooner.

Joshua: AL N; AC 10; MV 12; F1; hp 6; THAC0 20; #AT 1 (3 with long bow); Dmg by weapon type; ML 10. He is proficient in the use of the dagger and has specialized in the long bow, which gives him +2 on attack rolls to hit targets within 30'.

Although not pleased with his confinement, Joshua has been treated well and has found his captors to be pleasant and likable. He'll be grateful to be free but holds no grudge against Psyche or Broc. He will under no circumstances condone violence against them, suggesting instead that they be confronted directly and diplomatically; their masquerade has been uncovered, and he knows them for reasonable people.

Joshua's long bow and a quiver of 12 arrows are lying on a table at the south end of the room, near to the collection of valuable odds and ends Psyche has discovered incidentally while searching for the vault: a jeweled short sword (worth 200 gp); a fox-fur cape (300 gp); a pouch containing collected loose change (33 ep, 40 gp, and 12 pp); a star sapphire (1,000 gp); and a traveling spell book with *cantrip, detect magic, mount, unseen servant, alter self, tongues, Leomund's secure shelter,* and *extension II.*

41. Wine Cellar.

> This room is filled with casks and wine racks, though only a few bottles remain, and many of them are broken.

All the best spirits were taken long ago. Nothing in the remaining bottles is of any value, and what's left in the barrels is rancid.

42. Cold Storage.

> A small stream runs through this chamber from north to south, collecting in a pool near the north end. It enters and exits via a naturally carved passage, about 2' wide and 3' high.

The water is pure, cold, and drinkable. It was used for natural refrigeration of foodstuffs and served as the chief supply of fresh water for the manor.

It is possible to follow the stream in

either direction, but anyone larger than a dwarf will have a very hard time of it and will likely get stuck at some point if wearing a pack or bulky armor. The passage becomes too narrow for even a halfling to use about a hundred feet beyond the edge of the map in either direction.

43. Crypt.

> Three sarcophagi, all torn open, lie side by side at the west end of this room. Skeletal remains have been strewn about the place. The walls are covered with frescos of pastoral fields, now defaced by claw marks.

This crypt was defiled by Erebus while he was searching for some spirit that could tell him the hiding place of the Mistmoor's wealth. Unfortunately for Erebus, the lives of the three viscounts interred here predated the building of the vault.

Later, Psyche added a few touches to the damage Erebus did in his fit of temper, scattering the remains a bit more and fixing up the gashes in the plaster to look like claw marks.

A secret trapdoor in the crypt floor opens onto the stream that flows through area 42. There is no ladder, as the bed of the stream is only 5' below the floor of the crypt, and the rough tunnel walls offer plenty of handholds for those short enough to need them. The trapdoor is clearly visible from below.

In the stream just south of the trapdoor is Regine's limed-over skeleton, still clutching the hilt of the rusted and dagger impaled in her breast. The only remnant of the blade's original magic is a feeble dweomer. Regine was sitting on the banks of the stream when she killed herself. She fell in, and her body washed down to this point where it became stuck.

The Vault

The portal from the mirror in the viscount's room (area 32) opens into a vaulted, circular chamber 50' in diameter. This extra-planar chamber is similar to the space inside a *portable hole*. Because Erebus was on this subplane when he became an ether shadow, it's the only place other than the Ethereal plane he can fully materialize and be combatted. When Erebus is encountered anywhere outside the vault, he exists only as an immaterial phantom.

Since the vault exists as its own separate subplane, its location cannot be revealed by many of the magicks commonly used for such tasks (including *find the path* spells and *treasure finding* potions). There is also no way for the party to enter or exit the vault (unless they can plane travel) except via the mirror.

The vault is in fact a minor magical relic. It was created in the heyday of the Mistmoors by the same priest who scribed the scroll in area 22. The vault symbolized the favor the family's generosity brought from its patron goddess. There could be no greater injustice, she felt, than for such giving people to be robbed of that part of their wealth they kept for themselves.

> The floor of this grandly vaulted circular stone room is covered with mounds and bags of coins. Golden goblets, crystalline statues, and a multitude of other beautifully wrought objects of the most valuable materials protrude from the mass of coins. Chests full of jewels spill out here and there in dazzling sparkles of color, and suits of glittering ceremonial armor stand smartly at attention about the perimeter of the room. This is truly a hoard fit for the king of dragons.

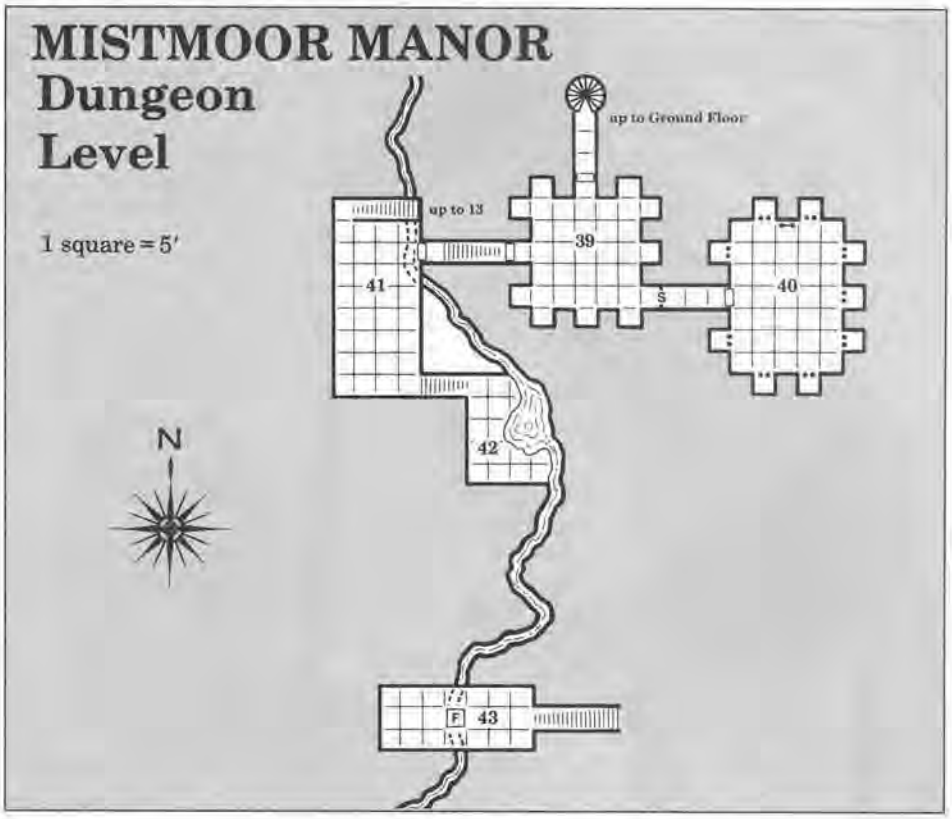
Although the guardians of the vault are not obvious, they do exist. Erebus himself is still here and has gathered a small army of undead about him to ambush any mortals foolish enough to invade his "tomb." When early expeditions to the manor entered the vault, they were followed in by skeletons that Erebus had animated during his life and secretly concealed near the manor. The skeletons surrounded the hapless adventurers and defeated them easily. Some of them were turned into shadows.

In addition to Erebus, there are 16 skeletons and six shadows residing in the vault.

Shadows (6): INT low; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 3+3; hp 23, 20, 19, 17 (×2), 16; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 2-5; SA strength drain; SD +1 or better weapon to hit; SZ M; ML special; XP 650; MC1.

Skeletons (16): hp 4 each; see area 5 for complete statistics.

All the skeletons and shadows lie



concealed under mounds of coins. Once the party has gotten well into the room, Erebus appears in the shape of a raven, gliding down from the shadows of the ceiling high above, to land atop a mound of treasure. Once he has the party's attention, he shifts into a shadowy human form and thanks the party for bringing him the last of the Mistmoors (Blaine) so that he can finish what he started so long ago. If the DM wants to fill in the players in on parts of the story that they've missed, Erebus can offer the standard "gloating villain" soliloquy. Once he's had his say, however, his minions come lurching and gliding out of their hiding places to attack. While the party may still find it possible to retreat, they will have to do so quickly, or they'll be sealed in for a battle to the death when the mirror portal closes, one turn after they entered.

Erebus and his minions try to concentrate their attacks on individual party members, taking them out of the fight as quickly as possible. In order of priority, they'll go first for priests, then wizards, then warriors, and finally rogues. A party that doesn't quickly fall into a fighting formation with its back to the wall or exit, showing a protective, heavily armored front line, may soon find that it's in real trouble.

Lying loose in the vault are 51,893 cp, 22,756 sp, 4,938 ep, 12,185 gp, and 1,892 pp. Additionally, there are 50 bags filled with precounted coins (100 coins to a bag, 10 bags of each type of coin), a total of 1,000 cp, 1,000 sp, etc.). Put together, the bagged and loose coinage covers Blaine's debts to the duke.

The jewels include many different types of gemstones—300 ornamental stones (10 gp each), 75 semiprecious stones (50 gp each), 50 fancy stones (100 gp each), 20 precious stones (500 gp each), 10 gems (1,000 gp each), and two jewels (5,000 gp each). The seven suits of ceremonial plate mail armor that stand about the edges of the room are worth 1,000 gp each. Other items in the vault include a cape of winter wolf fur (2,000 gp); an exquisite crystal statuette of a rearing pegasus (5,000 gp); a pair of identical golden scepters (1,700 gp each); a ruby-and-gold necklace (10,000 gp) in an ornate silver jewelry box (500 gp); a set of five ivory figurines (elephant, wolf, unicorn, tiger, and stag, worth 250 gp each); a black sapphire and platinum ring (6,000 gp); 10 jars of rare spices (100 gp each); a cask of fine dark wine—a 400-year-old vintage, perfectly preserved at the height of quality (4,000 gp); a complete chess set of ivory and ebony (1,000 gp); and a marble statue of a nymph, obviously meant to be the centerpiece of a fountain, laced with decorative highlights of silver and turquoise (two tons of statue worth 8,000 gp). Maneuvering this last item through the mirror could prove quite a trick, if the strength could be mustered to move it at all. It was brought in with magical aid.

The remains and equipment of earlier expeditions to the manor have been piled up under one particularly large heap of coins near the entrance, along with those skeletons that have been "killed" in battle. Blaine will grant any of this adventuring booty to the party, as it isn't really part of the treasure he hired them to find. All monetary wealth has been hopelessly mingled with the rest of the treasure, but amidst the mundane armor, weapons and equipment are a potion of *treasure finding*, a *ring of protection +2*, a *phylactery of long years*, and a *two-handed sword +1*.

Concluding the Adventure

If Blaine fails to recover his treasure, he will forget about title, status, and family honor, and try to disappear before he can be arrested (he is *chaotic* good). If the party will help him do this, he will be eternally grateful. A successful conclusion to the adventure, however could prove much more complicated.

With the real death of Erebus, the ghosts of Mistmoor are at last free to rest. Regine simply disappears, but if the party has befriended Reveri and Rebecca, the girls won't leave without saying goodbye. Most likely, they leave a note that the PCs will be sure to find, written in Reveri's hand and scented with Becky's perfume: "To our noble saviors: More thanks than you can know. When we meet again, may your lives have been long and full." It is signed by both girls.

The one exception to this circumstance is if Blaine dies because the PCs chose not to save him or if they themselves were responsible for his death. In that case, Reveri and Rebecca will certainly know the circumstances of the murder (Blaine himself tells them as he meets them on his way to the outer planes) and will act to avenge their kinsman, unleashing all their ghostly powers in an effort to destroy the offenders. If Erebus has already been slain, this is their last act before they depart to their own rest.

If alive and well, Psyche and Broc take their leave immediately to start planning their scam to steal Blaine's tax money between the time it leaves his hands and the time it arrives at the duke's castle.

Once Blaine has set aside the money needed to pay his debts, he will still be feeling very wealthy and generous. If the party lived up to its contract and generally impressed him as well-intentioned people, he'll more than keep his part of the bargain, offering them a full 5,000 gp for their services, in whatever available form they wish.

A bit later, Blaine will suddenly realize that not only is he a viscount, but a viscount with a proud heritage, a spacious, beautiful home (once it's been renovated), and enough wealth to restore the clan of Mistmoor to some semblance of its former glory. All he needs now is the people to make it happen.

Most of his immediate efforts will go toward draining part of the swamp to improve his lands and the lifestyle of his subjects, but he'll also take actions that may concern the PCs in several ways unless they've proved themselves untrustworthy.

First, he'll probably make an offer to become the party's patron, providing them with financial aid (be sensible about how much) if they will associate themselves with him, attaching the name of Mistmoor to their heroic deeds.

Second, as nobility in name only, Blaine had no vassals of any kind. He's in need of knights, and if the PCs are willing, he'll be more than ready to take them into his service.

Third, clan Mistmoor has been tottering on the brink of extinction for the last 200 years, but never more precariously than it is now. Unless Blaine does something about it, he is the last of the Mistmoors (his love life has been nonexistent since he was barred from seeing the duke's daughter). If any PC is a charismatic female of compatible race, Blaine could take a serious romantic interest in her.

How to Deal with Greedy PCs

The web of story considerations in this adventure demands an excess of treasure to be found in the vault of the Mistmoors, while basic game sense demands that the PCs not be allowed to keep it for themselves.

The simplest and most direct method of avenging betrayal to Blaine is to turn Rebecca and Reveri loose on the party. They're not going to take kindly to anyone mistreating their closest surviving kin, and acting in concert, fighting intelligently, the two ghosts should be able to trash the offending PCs in no time flat. This is especially true if the PCs are just emerging from the vault, drained from their battle with Erebus—the most likely juncture for a betrayal to have taken place.

The second DM's safety net is Psyche. She may be willing to leave the treasure to Blaine to save his life, but if any greedy adventurer is going to just walk off with the loot, she's determined it's going to be her. She'll do her best to rapidly empty the vault with her *portable hole* if given half a chance, dumping bulky loot in a nearby hiding place (it won't all fit in the hole) and coming back for it later.

Failing in that, she'll follow the PCs wherever they go, using her disguise skills, thieving skills, and general con-artist aptitude to divest them of their wealth at every turn. She may even turn this into something of a career, recruiting a whole band of accomplices (especially magically talented ones) for the express purpose of fleecing wealthy, foolish adventurers. The PCs could remain one of her favorite targets long after she'd taken them for their profits from this adventure. If they prove particularly canny and all else fails, Psyche will begin tipping off every thief and two-bit thug she meets as to the party's vast wealth, and let them see to it that the PCs don't prosper by their evil.

Finally, there's the duke. At least 35,000 gp of the treasure is legally his, and if Blaine dies it all goes to him. He's not going to let anybody walk off with that much of his money. He's got an entire duchy at his command, and probably the allegiance of several powerful spell-casters.

Because the only road out of the marsh leads through Mistmoor, thieving PCs will have to go to great pains to keep it a secret from the villagers that they were the ones who hauled off the treasure. Even if they manage the trick, the duke will institute an investigation, if for no other reason than to track down Blaine for trial. This investigation will inevitably lead him to the PCs and their loot (there is no greater detective's tool than high-level magic).

Especially if the PCs murdered Blaine for the loot, the DM should pin them to the wall. Ruin their lives, or even end their lives entirely. There's no excuse for what they've done, and they deserve whatever the DM dishes out. Ω

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Concluding the Adventure

Dealing with Pzyruxal at the end of this adventure is a tricky situation for the party. Under no circumstances will she allow anyone in the party to leave until all five of her eggs have been recovered. Even if some of the eggs were destroyed, she wants to see the shells, and she demands an explanation as to why the PCs allowed such a tragedy to happen.

Avoiding a confrontation with the dragon is nearly impossible if the PCs simply hand the eggs over to her after finding them. She considers her agreement with them totally void if any of her young died during the search. For that matter, she considers it totally void even if all five are returned to her in perfect condition—she'll merely have some other reason for breaking the agreement. If the PCs have Pzyruxal's lost wand (from area 12) and have not offered it to her, she uses this excuse to justify nullifying their agreement. At the very least, she refuses to give the party the rest of their payment, and she attacks the party after her eggs have been placed safely away.

In order to have any chance of getting away with their hides, much less the portion of the payment still owed them, the PCs have to hold one or more of the eggs as a bargaining chip when dealing with Pzyruxal. They will also have to come up with some pretty slick oratory to avoid a fight. The PCs cannot get Pzyruxal to accept any of the stone eggs; she can easily distinguish between her own eggs and the fakes made by the grue.

There are a number of things that the party can attempt to do. They may try to lure Pzyruxal from the hillside into her lair and ambush her. If done with care, this should surprise her, and the cramped quarters would prevent her from using her wing-buffet and tail attacks.

The PCs may also try to escape through some form of trickery. If they are successful, the dragon spends three or four days trying to hunt them down, scanning the countryside from on high. If that fails, she goes on a month-long rampage, killing and destroying anything within 50 miles of her lair. The PCs may decide to intervene if the tales of destruction reach them. If Pzyruxal is allowed to tear apart villages and take out her anger on the innocent for a whole month, she leaves for parts unknown to seek a new mate and raise a new family.

Whatever the party decides to do, the DM must use discretion to decide the outcome. In general, Pzyruxal wants the PCs' hides if they fail to save her eggs—and probably even if they succeed! She is ruthless and intelligent, and she deals with the PCs very harshly once she has what she wants. Unless they can intimidate her in some way, the party must kill or subdue her in order to insure their own survival. Whether she wins or loses, Pzyruxal goes off in search of a new lair if she survives.

Once the task is complete, the PCs can rest up a bit before continuing their original mission. The orcs that served Pzyruxal are left to themselves, whether she was slain or simply driven off. After a few days, they go to the dragon's lair to see what became of her. When they find out that she is gone, they leave to seek the rest of their tribe.

The orc tribe of the Bloody-Axe is camped about 60 miles north of the dragon's lair. They are almost 300 warriors strong and have many captives, as they are particularly fond of the slave trade. The adventurers could probably find them if they were interested, or the orcs may find the PCs first. Ω

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